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[MR. SAMUEL HITCHEM.]

THE GIPSY PEER, OR, A SLAVE OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Sleepless suspicion waits upon his crime,
And fear within his breast,
Till death shall cancel his full time
His soul shall know no rest.

MR. SAMUEL HITCHEM, notwithstanding his seeming dulness, was not slow to follow up the proclamation of the reward by a systematic search on his own account for the suspected gipsies.

He was urged on his pursuit by every means which Lord Raymond could devise.

Nothing was to be spared, no trouble or pains avoided, and Tazoni must be brought to justice.

At the end of a week, however, Mr. Hitchem was still unsuccessful, and arrived at Northcliffe to report progress.

His colourless eyes seemed more unobservant than ever, and Lord Raymond began to despise him as a dotard and an idiot; but the detective was observing from behind his mask, watching the pale, haggard face of the young lord with cunning curiosity, and while he watched he grew more puzzled than ever.

"Well," said Lord Raymond, when Mr. Hitchem had made his statement, "you are still of opinion that this gipsy is the criminal?"

"Quite, my lord," said Mr. Hitchem.

"And yet you have found nothing farther?"

"Exactly. And that strengthens my opinion. If this man, Tazoni, were innocent he would be here bold as brass, to establish an alibi; but he does nothing of the sort. He keeps dark, most suspiciously dark, and we lose all clue to him at 'Bell Inn,' in the Borough. He can't have got abroad, because we have kept a strict watch upon the docks. His success in eluding us is the more singular because of his accomplices. When there's a woman in the case—"

"A woman!" said Lord Raymond, betraying for the moment his irritability, but recovering instantly

and motioning with his hand towards the decanter which stood upon the table at a convenient nearness to Mr. Hitchem's long fingers. "A woman!—take some more wine. What woman?"

Mr. Hitchem, who had apparently quite failed to notice Lord Raymond's sharpness, replied, leisurely lifting his gray eyes with slow torpor.

"A woman of course, my lord. The girl Lurli." "There I think you are wrong," said Lord Raymond. "I don't think she had any hand in it. What assistance could she be to a ferocious burglar? Besides, she was totally unlike that sort of person."

"You knew her then, my lord," said Mr. Hitchem, softly.

Lord Raymond pulled his wandering sentences up very shortly.

"I had seen her. They encamped on my father's property. I know nothing of her beyond that, of course."

"Of course," said the detective, blandly. "Go upon reasonable grounds of suspicion, my lord," he added. "She disappears on the night of the burglary; her people can give no satisfactory account of her disappearance, for of course the story of the post-chaise, etc., is a mere cock-and-bull concection."

"Of course," answered Lord Raymond, impatiently.

"Just so," said Mr. Hitchem. "Then I conclude that they started for London, the man to keep in hiding while the girl got rid of the spoil. You see, my lord, the women are always better at that. In nine burglaries out of ten there's a woman to manage the afterwork—to sell the jewels and act as go-between 'twixt the cracksmen and the smelters. Take my word for it, my lord, the girl's in the swim, and where we find her the man Tazoni is not far off."

Lord Raymond bit his nails and eyed the dull Cookney face from under his half-closed eyelids.

"Better confine yourself to the latter, I think," he said. "Depend upon it the girl has quite a different reason for her flight. Hunt up the man, hunt up the man!"

"Very good, my lord," said Mr. Hitchem. "How is Lord Northcliffe getting on?"

Lord Raymond sighed deeply.

"Very badly, I regret to say. His reason seems to have completely deserted him."

"Not well enough to see me, I suppose?" asked Mr. Hitchem.

"Certainly not," replied Lord Raymond, emphatically. "The doctor will not allow even me to approach the bed."

"Ah!" said Mr. Hitchem, sympathically. "A great blow for you, my lord."

And he sighed, keeping his glance fixed upon Lord Raymond.

"Very great indeed," replied the young man. "It has quite unhinged me; I am not like the same man."

"I daresay not," said Mr. Hitchem. "By the way, my lord, perhaps you may be able to identify these," and with a suddenness which was not quite unpremeditated he drew from his pocket a bracelet and a ring.

"Ah!" said Lord Raymond, snatching at them in his illbred way. "Where did you find these?"

"I took them from the gipsies; indeed they offered them. One, the ring, was in the possession of an old woman; the bracelet was given me by a woman named Zillah. Do you recognise them, my lord? Are they part of the contents of the jewel case?"

"Yes—no," hesitated Lord Raymond, staring at the trinkets with an evil frown. "You took them from the gipsies, did you? You had better leave them with me, I have no doubt Lady Northcliffe will be able to identify them as part of her property. If she does it will serve to fix the suspicion more strongly upon that ruffian. In any case, the possession of such articles shows that the gipsies have had something of the kind in hand."

"Exactly, my lord," said Mr. Hitchem. "And now, with your permission, I will return to town."

"Do you require any more money at present?" asked Lord Raymond.

"Well, not much, my lord; about fifty pounds will do."

Lord Raymond gave him the fifty pounds, taking them from a bureau which he unlocked with a key of Lord Northcliffe's; for since the earl's illness he had taken the management of the estate and possession of all the keys and documents.

Mr. Hitchem pocketed the sovereigns and took his departure, brightening up considerably when out of sight and safe upon the road and muttering to himself:

"Now why does he want to throw the scent away from the girl? Knew her too, and answered for her quite eagerly. Really that's a most extraordinary young man, and if he wasn't a lord—son of the earl, too—why, I should turn my attention to him. But as it is—ahem!—well, I find I have quite enough to do to earn the money by hunting up the game I'm directed to."

So Mr. Hitchem returned to London and started on twenty false scents after a wild, ferocious gipsy with savage eyes, while Mr. Frank Forest, the gentlemanly, distinguished writer for the "Fashionable Gazette," was living in perfect security.

Lord Northcliffe, as Lord Raymond had said, was certainly in an extremely bad way. The savage blow which the burglar had struck him on the head had, so the doctor said, deprived him of distinct articulation and reason. He was suffering now from intense weakness and a hallucination which displayed itself perpetually when Lord Raymond's name was mentioned.

Whenever he heard it he would rise, with flashing eyes, and assert that his son was in some way connected with the robbery. For the first few days after the burglary his mind, though somewhat clouded, had seemed sufficiently clear to understand the bearings of the case, and the celebrated London physician, anxious to obtain any aid for the detective, had shown the earl the rough fur cap. No sooner had he seen it than he requested Florence to fetch Raymond.

Florence, who had avoided the young man since she had been installed as nurse, had obeyed, and Raymond, with a great show of affection, approached the bed, bending over his father and inquiring in a hushed voice how he was.

But Lord Northcliffe had shrunk from him and while clasping Lady Northcliffe with one hand held out the fur cap in the other and requested Lord Raymond to put it on.

Raymond started, changed colour and shook his head.

"Do it to humour him, my lord," whispered the physician.

And Lord Raymond, after some hesitation, took the cap and put it on.

No sooner had he done so than Lord Northcliffe started up in bed, pointed at him with a menacing finger, and attempted to say something, but a fit came on and rendered him speechless.

Lady Northcliffe was taken, weeping, from the room, and the doctor from that moment feared that Lord Northcliffe's reason was irreparably unhinged.

Poor Lady Northcliffe, always delicate, and so devotedly attached to the chivalrous husband whose aim in life had been to gratify her lightest wish, would have given way beneath her great sorrow had it not been for the Dartegles.

Such true sympathy as that which Lord and Lady Dartegle extended to her is rare in this selfish world of ours.

Then, again, in Florence she found all the tenderness and love of a daughter.

Florence, too, had reason to be proud of her strength of mind and restraint of will. She not only nursed Lord Northcliffe, but comforted and consoled his mourning, sorrow-stricken wife.

There is no cure for our own ills and sorrows like hard-working charity.

Little time had Florence for the secrets and desires of her own heart, in that house of suffering, and though Tazoni was remembered in her prayers she drove all thought of him from her heart, and whenever she found her thoughts straying to her preserver set about some work for the sick earl or repaired to Lady Ethel's boudoir.

So horrible was the whole subject to Lady Northcliffe that the details of the tragedy had never yet been given her.

As yet both she and Florence were in total ignorance of the suspicions which had closed around Tazoni or the reward which had been offered for his apprehension.

She avoided Lord Raymond, who now seemed as loth to touch upon the subject as any one. Indeed, he had flown into something approaching anger when his valet ventured one morning to ask him if the perpetrators of the outrage had been discovered.

A great change was coming over the young lord. He was just as pale as ever, more haggard indeed, but his moroseness had settled into a stealthy taciturnity.

He walked or rode about the estate, and looked into its affairs with the air and mien of a master.

and the people around did not fail to whisper that the old earl would not be buried a minute too soon for the young lord.

One morning Florence had been requested by the doctor to send a boy to Norton for some medicine which he had left behind, and Florence, entering the breakfast-room to ring the bell, found Lord Raymond sitting with the newspaper in his hand, but not reading it.

She, with her thick woollen slippers, entered so noiselessly that he did not hear her, and she saw that he was not reading it and that he was deep in thought—not pleasant thought either, to judge from the heavy scowl upon his low forehead.

Beside his plate was an open letter, which he had evidently just perused.

As she passed round the table he started and looked up.

"Oh, it's you, Florence," he said, rising awkwardly and rustling the paper, glancing up at her under his brows. "How is my father now?"

"Neither better nor worse," replied Florence, ringing the bell.

"Hem!" he said, scratching his chin. "I say, don't you think you will make yourself ill nursing him so long? It doesn't seem the right thing to me for a lady like you to be doing the work of a hospital nurse. You can't do him any good."

Florence stopped him.

"We can at least try. Do not fear for my health, Lord Raymond. I am strong, and I am only too glad to use that strength, even in a small service for dear Lord Northcliffe."

"Well, you were always wilful, you know, and I suppose you must have your way. Don't think I want to get you out of the house," he added, "you know that I'm only happy when you are in it."

Florence rang again. All the bells were muffled throughout the house, and the footman had not heard it the first time.

She merely inclined her head in response, and the footman entering, addressed herself to him.

"Will you send a person over to the surgery at Norton, please, and tell him to ask for the bottle of medicine which Doctor Walton left on the second shelf? Stay; I think I had better write it down." And she took a gold pencil-case from her pocket.

"Paper?" said Lord Raymond, seeing her look round.

"Here, will this do?"

And he handed her the envelope of the letter which lay open upon the table.

Florence thanked him and wrote the message.

As she gave it to the footman, the handwriting of the address seemed familiar to her and she paused to look at it.

Surely she must be mistaken, but it resembled Emilia Slade's!

She looked again and felt almost convinced that it was Miss Slade's, but when she reflected that it could not be possible for Miss Emilia to be in correspondence with Lord Raymond she decided that it was a case of resemblance only, and giving the envelope to the servant, prepared to follow him from the room.

Lord Raymond stopped her, however.

"Florence," he said, rustling the paper and glancing up at her covertly, "you don't ask how we are getting on in our search after the ruffians who nearly killed my father. But I suppose you are curious all the same, eh?"

Florence turned to him with a flash of fire in her fine eyes.

"I would give all I possess to see the vile ruffian who gave poor Lord Northcliffe that blow brought to justice."

"Ah!" said Lord Raymond. "I thought you couldn't be so indifferent as one might think, from your being so quiet about it. Well, if you'd like to hear, I think I can tell you something. You know we have had our suspicions all along—me and the detective?"

Florence turned, still standing, and shook her head.

"Oh, yes, from the minute I knew of it, I thought I could spot the fellow, and directly the detective heard the case he was of my opinion. Come, can't you guess now?"

"No," said Florence, sadly, after a moment's thought.

Lord Raymond looked up at her from the corners of his eyes with a malicious leer.

"You can't? Come now, try! Well, I'll tell you. What do you say to that big, clumsy gipsy fellow, Tazoni?"

Florence for the life of her could not suppress the exclamation of scorn nor keep back the smile of sublime disbelief which curled her lips.

"He!" she said, with a deliberate inflection of incredulity. "I should as soon have suspected you, Lord Raymond."

The paper dropped from his hands, and he started to his feet, his face livid and his eyes blazing.

"Me—what do you mean?" he gasped.

Then as Florence's face expressed the contemptuous astonishment which had taken the place

for a moment of her scorn, he laughed a dry laugh and sank into the chair.

"Of course—or—oh, yes, what strange things you say! A fellow never knows how to take you, Florence. But of course you won't believe anything wrong of that gipsy set, especially that burly ruffian. I knew you had taken a fancy to him, and given him horses to break in, and all that sort of thing. But wait till you've heard the evidence."

"Evidence!" said Florence, in a low voice.

"Ay, evidence," repeated Lord Raymond. "What do you say to this fellow's being seen hanging about Earls Court the night of the ball watching the people coming away? What do you say to his being seen cutting across the woods in the direction of Northcliffe a few hours before the attack on the house? What do you say to his disappearance that night—not only him, but that girl of his—what do they call her—Lurli? Disappearing and getting clean away, ah, and keeping so close that the police can't find 'em, though we've offered a hundred pounds reward!"

He paused for want of breath.

Florence, whose gaze had been fixed upon his dark, cunning face as if it had been chained by some horrible spell, turned deadly white and grasped the back of a chair which stood near her. She could not speak, she could scarcely connect the words with their meaning.

Tazoni a thief, a burglar, a would-be murderer! Tazoni flying from justice, and hiding like a common thief from the police!

Oh, no! It was impossible! She—she who held his heart in her hands—knew him too well for that. It was simply impossible!

The colour and the scorn came back to her face, and she shook her head.

"It is a mistake," she said, in a low, clear voice. "I am sure it is a mistake. It cannot be. I know him, Tazoni, too well. He is incapable of such fearful crime. I would not believe it though a dozen honest and true men declared him guilty."

Lord Raymond looked at her with a new emotion—that of jealousy.

Why should she so persistently refuse to believe in this gipsy fellow's guilt? What was he to her that she should defend him and praise him, as if he were a hero, before him, Lord Raymond, too, who declared him guilty? His face grew black as night.

"Always obstinate, Florence," he said. "When you've taken a fancy you'll stick to it, I know. But stop a minute," he added, as if struck by a fresh link in the evidence. "I think I can give you some stronger grounds for my suspicions. Wait here a minute, will you?"

Florence stood as if she were carved in stone while he ran upstairs and returned after a few minutes with a small packet in his hand.

"Have you lost anything lately," he asked.

"Lost anything," repeated Florence, who dreaded she knew not what.

"Ah, lost any articles of jewellery, such as a bracelet or a ring?"

"No," said Florence.

He looked at her fixedly, jealously, for a full minute, then tore the wrapper from the packet and held out her bracelet and ring.

Florence changed colour.

"Where were these found?" she asked.

"Where should they be found," he asked "but with the people who stole 'em? They were found by my detective in the possession of your innocent gipsy favourite. They're yours, ain't they?"

"Yes; but they were not stolen," said Florence, distinctly.

"Not stolen!" he said, staring at her suspiciously.

"How did they come by them then?"

"I gave them to them," said Florence, quietly, meeting his evil regard with calm eyes.

"You gave them to them!" he repeated, turning the bracelet round. "What, a ruby ring and a bracelet worth twenty guineas! Who do you think will believe that? What did you give them to them for?"

"That is a matter which concerns me and them alone," replied Florence, haughtily.

He glared at her, and passed his hand across his brow.

"Does it?" he said, with a sneer. "Perhaps the judge at the trial will say it concerns somebody else—my father and me, for instance. You don't suppose that a jury will believe you give twenty-guinea-bracelets and ruby rings to every gipsy you come across? They'll want to know the reason."

"When they do they shall have it. But I deny your right, Lord Raymond, to any such information," said Florence, calmly, and before he could say another word she left the room.

She walked upstairs as if wrapped in the horror of some dreadful dream.

She did not believe it, however overwhelming the proofs against him she could not.

No, he was shined in the sanctuary of her

heart—godlike, heroic, gentle of hand, pure of soul.

To believe him guilty of a mean, savage crime was to lose all belief in the nobility of manhood and to declare the Creator's greatest handiwork a marvel of hypocrisy and deceit.

Once let her faith in Tazoni, the gipsy chief, who had offered his life to save her honour, go and farewell for ever all belief in man's truth or woman's love!

But it was impossible. It was some mad idea of the drunken peer and an over-cunning detective, and Tazoni, who was doubtless ignorant of the charge hanging over him, would, the moment it came to his ears, return to Earls-court and prove his innocence with a word.

Lurli, too. She had disappeared with him!

Here a slight pain caught her breath, but she beat it back and overcame it. Come what might she would trust in his honour and his love, though she feared not accept either.

Lord Raymond looked after her for a few seconds with a deep scowl.

Then with a characteristic oath he flung the paper from him and dropped into his chair.

"Confound her for a forward, insolent jade!" he muttered, striking the table with his large fist until the dainty breakfast service rattled again. "There's no comfort in her. She hates me, I can see it. Hates me! and, if I didn't know her pride wouldn't let her, I should say she'd fallen in love with a low gipsy! Hates me! Well, I almost hate her. Why can't she be amiable and friendly? Why can't she be like this other one?" and he took up the open letter and gazed at it moodily.

"This is something like a letter. Written like a lady, too," he muttered, and, soothing his vanity, he muttered it through.

"MY DEAR LORD RAYMOND,—Though I fear it is very forward and improper, I feel that I must write and tell you how my heart bleeds for you in your trouble. It must be so dreadful to be shut up in a place so dark and dismal and so oppressively quiet. Poor, dear Lord Northcliffe! how fearful that he should have been attacked by the desperate ruffians. It is always better, don't you think, to call up the servants and summon the police than to attack them oneself? But I am sure dear Lord Northcliffe did all for the best. When I heard of it I was taken seriously ill—so stupid of me, was it not?—but for the first minute or so I feared that it was you who were hurt. Dear Lord Raymond, I should have been so sorry. We were such good friends! Ah! I shall never forget those darting rambles in the woods, when you were so attentive and kind to a silly, thoughtless girl. You know my address, and I am sure you will give me a call when you come to town and tell me all the particulars and let me see for myself that you are not hurt. Do not forget! No. 27, Norman Road, Belgrave."

"Yours, dear Lord Raymond,

"Ever most sincere,

"EMILIA SLADE."

"Twenty-seven Norman Road," he muttered, folding the letter and putting it in his pocket-book. "I'll call and see her, hang me if I don't! I must go up soon to call somewhere else, too. Pretty little tiger-cat. I wonder whether she's tamer now!"

CHAPTER XXV.

Liberty! thou sweetest of good gifts,
Without thee life is but a barren toil!

FOR the first time in her life Lurli, the child of freedom, tasted the bitterness born of bonds.

No sooner was she placed in the carriage than the polished Mr. Denville took his seat beside her, and the horses dashed towards London.

They were weary of waiting, and quite fresh. In the intense bewilderment of the moment Lurli was still conscious of the speed they were going, and understood the smile with which Mr. Denville turned to her after peering through the window.

"Quick work, my pretty wood nymph!" he said, pleasantly. "We shall soon reach London, and once there all pursuit will be useless. Come, make the best of a good thing, and be cheerful," and he leaned forward to arrange a travelling cloak around her.

But Lurli drew back into the corner of the carriage, and eyed him with passionate disdain.

"Very well," he said, dropping the cloak. "Then you must suit, if you insist on being uncomfortable. Pardon me if I take a little rest; your capture has been a work of so much time that I am quite exhausted."

So saying he made himself comfortable, and fell asleep.

Lurli sat crouching at the farther end of the carriage watching him, her bosom heaving, and her eyes flashing. Every now and then her perplexed brain recurred to Tazoni. What had become of him? Was the end a double one, and on some other road

were a pair of tearing horses bearing him into some dark trap? Where was she being taken? To whose hands was she to be delivered? Was this false, smiling villain the chief mover in the plot, or did Lord Raymond's vile spirit stand behind it, alluring her to her destruction?

But at present her captor slept. Could she not make the first effort to escape?

Softly she rose and tried the carriage doors. They were locked, and with a heavy sob the gipsy girl sank back into her corner, and covered her face with her hands.

The carriage sped on, stopping once or twice to exchange horses, which they did, not at an inn, but up a bye-road, the exchange being effected with the utmost rapidity. Every precaution had been taken to prevent an inkling of the truth, and when any inquiry was made as they came nearer London, the coachman, with a wink, intimated that he was conveying a runaway pair, and knew that he could count upon the assistance of the questioner rather than interference.

Lurli knew when they had reached London by the jolting of the carriage over the stones, the rattle of the passing vehicles, and the striking of the many clocks. But London, the destination of so many, was evidently not Mr. Denville's, for after stopping at a small back street to get fresh horses, they sped on their way again, and the wheels once more rolled over country roads.

Once in the night Mr. Denville had brought a glass of wine, and offered it with a polite bow to his captive, but Lurli had struck the glass from his hand, and, with an amused laugh, Mr. Denville declared that he would make no more overtures.

From this speech Lurli argued that the odious creature was a tool rather than the principal, and determined to watch with the utmost vigilance for any chance of escape, judging that he would be less strict as her guard than if he had been the prime mover of the plot.

But Mr. Denville was an accomplished gentleman in many respects, and never took a nap or left the carriage without securely locking the door, and Lurli at last sank to a state approaching despair.

At last, after a journey that would have been extraordinary under the most favourable circumstances, the carriage pulled up, and Mr. Denville, looking through the window guard, uttered an exclamation of satisfaction.

"Arrived at last! Now, my wood nymph," he added, turning to Lurli and speaking with a pleasant but none the less threatening smile. "Do you mean to be sensible, or shall I have to go through that painful exhibition of force which rendered your entry of the carriage so unbecoming and hurtful to the feelings? In plain words, will you leave the carriage and enter the house yourself or shall I be compelled to gag you and carry you in?"

Lurli sprang to her feet with an indignant scorn.

"I will go quietly—to death—rather than that thou shouldst touch me!"

"Prettily said," retorted Mr. Denville, "and sensibly too. I don't want you to go to death—indeed, if you are a sensible girl you will look upon a very pretty life if you choose; but I must consign you to this house and I would rather do it quietly. Now then, place your hand upon my arm. So. Now understand that at a word or a movement indicating resistance I throw this shawl over your head and carry you in by force."

Shuddering, Lurli laid the top of her fingers upon the false-hearted gentleman's arm, and in his best manner Mr. Denville helped her to alight from the carriage.

She lifted her dark, flashing eyes and looked round.

It was midday and the sun shone upon a country lane, sheltered by lime trees and beautifully kept. Opposite her was a small house with a lawn extended to the wood. Behind it she could catch the gleam of a broad river, and along its side there glittered a line of conservatories. It was a villa on the Thames, but Lurli did not know it, indeed she was as ignorant of the locality as if she had been conveyed to Africa.

Two women servants came from the door, courtesied to Mr. Denville, and glancing with curiosity, not untinged by respect, at Lurli, asked if there were any cloaks or wraps to bring from the carriage.

"None," replied Mr. Denville, adding, in a whisper: "Be quick, this is no tame pigeon, but one fresh from the woods."

The servants turned in as he spoke, and Lurli, entering a low, prettily decorated hall, heard the door of her prison-house slammed behind her.

"Ah!" said Mr. Denville, with an air of relief, throwing himself upon an old oak chair which stood in the hall and eyeing Lurli with a smile. "I am not sorry that the journey is over, and I daresay you are not either. Now, my dear madam, let me give you a word of advice before I take my farewell."

He rose as he spoke and made his bow.

Lurli, keeping her eyes fixed upon him, shrank back, as she had never failed to do whenever he approached her, and listened scornfully.

"Be kind enough to look round you," said Mr. Denville. "You see an elegantly appointed villa, as choice a little cottage ornée as a lady could desire. My friend, the owner, through me, my dear madam, prays your acceptance of it. All within it is yours, every little piece of choice furniture, real china, and artistic gems. All yours, my dear Lurli, as long as you confine yourself to its limits. In other words, you must consider yourself for the time what every beautiful bird of any value is,—caged. Every room in the house is open to you, and there is only one restriction. You must not pass that door."

And he pointed through the glass door of the hall to the iron-barred garden gate.

"You will find the servants extremely respectful and well trained. The lady's-maid I can recommend as a most accomplished individual. Should you want for anything in the way of amusement you have but to ask for it. I will not enter into the beauties of the scenery but should think you will say, if you admire nature, that there is as magnificent a view from that window as one could desire. And now, my dear madam, allow me to take my most respectful and affectionate farewell."

And with a low bow and a mocking smile he took up his hat.

Lurli opened her lips as if about to speak, but though Mr. Denville paused respectfully, she continued silent, and he passed out.

Lurli watched one of the servants follow him and lock the door after him, then sank on the massive floor and covered her face with her hands.

Two or three servants instantly surrounded her and with respectful solicitude pressed her to accept some restorative.

Pushing them from her, however, the gipsy girl sprang to her feet, and in the most impassioned language implored them to give her her liberty.

Alas, they were only too used to such prayers to pay much regard to them. Even when she sank upon her knees and grasped the gown of the youngest and prettiest in a frenzy of despair the girl only shook her head and said that it was impossible, and that she had better keep calm and comfortable.

Then Lurli's pride returned. Drawing herself to her full height, she pointed to the door and told them to leave her, as they were only women in outward form and pitiless fiends at heart—to leave her to her misery and beware how they approached her.

They smiled, not mockingly, and one of them who had been set aside as her maid offered to show her her room. Lurli followed the girl, entirely disregarding the appropriate adornments of the hall, and entering a room exquisitely furnished in ebony picked out with gold and relieved by blue satin, threw herself on the couch and gave way to her tearless despair.

The servant reasoned with her in vain. She tried to rouse her to some interest in the luxuries around her. She flung open the mirrored door of a wardrobe and pointed to an array of dresses, all in the latest fashion and of the most costly materials. She even threw the choicest of them on the floor and bade Lurli admire them, but the gipsy girl was proof against all such allurements, and at last so overwhelmed the astounded maid with her vehement scorn that the girl left her in high dudgeon, and Lurli was alone at last.

All that night, the second one she had passed without sleep, she paced the floor, at times calling on Tazoni, Martha, Zillah, to come and rescue her, at others sinking with a groan on to the soft satin fauteuils and relapsing into the torpor of exhaustion.

In the morning the maid brought her chocolate in a dainty cup, but Lurli refused it with contempt.

She declared that she would neither eat nor drink while they held her captive, and that their prison would soon be her tomb.

She kept her threat until they forced her to eat and drink while she was in a faint, and, at last, Time, which breaks the strongest spirit, so bent her that she sank into a languid, hopeless state more like a trance-life than natural existence, and passed the days wandering over the elegant prison, indifferent to its luxuries, blind to all its costly beauties, with only one hope—that of death.

Sometimes at sunset she would sit at the window of her room, which overlooked the river, and, her pale face sunk upon her hands, watch its bright stream, longing that her dead body were floating down it to the sea.

Tazoni she never expected to see more, for she considered it as simply impossible to find her throughout crowded London. All she desired now was death.

The window at which she so often sat was directly over the river's bank, and she could sometimes hear

the conversation carried on in the many boats that crowded here.

In time—after a week or so—she began to recognize the crafts themselves.

There was one, a light little skiff, in which a gentleman always rowed. He was endowed with a face that was very handsome and extremely weary.

He seemed particularly indolent more often allowing the boat to float down the stream than rowing, and sometimes moored it to the bank and lay full length reading.

From noticing the boat, Lurli began to watch its owner, and in a fitful, absent way grew to speculate upon his character. Notwithstanding the weary, listless expression of his face, it looked a good and kind one, and she at last asked eagerly, if, supposing that she were to call to him and tell him her story, he would help her?

One day she watched for him. He came rowing slowly up the stream, and moored his boat within gunshot of the window. Lurli's heart beat fast as she watched him throw himself full length along the boat and commence to read. Yes, she would chance it. Raising her voice just sufficiently high to reach him, she commenced to sing a gipsy ballad.

He started up slightly, looked round, and seeing her, closed his book. Her heart beating faster than ever, Lurli beckoned him with her hand. But to her surprise and anguish he looked at her with a pitying smile, and, sighing deeply, unmoored his boat and rowed away.

With a cry of disappointment Lurli turned and found the lady's-maid regarding her with a pitying smile.

"It's no use, miss," she said. "It isn't likely that master would let you sit at the window within sight of the river and all that, without taking proper precautions to prevent your escaping."

"What do you mean?" asked Lurli, breathlessly, she had learned to drop the Zingari "thee" and "thou."

"Why, don't you see, miss, it would never do to have a young lady in the house shut up so close-like without giving a reason for it. The neighbours about would be suspicious. So—but there I won't tell you, unless you promise not to take on."

"Tell me!" said Lurli, with a despairful smile.

"You see I am quite quiet and calm."

"Well, miss, it's generally believed—indeed we've told everybody, that you're a relation of the master's, not quite right in your mind."

"That I am mad!" breathed Lurli, with a moan.

"Just so, miss, and very convenient it is, it stops all questioning and prevents any interference. That gentleman you spoke to—I wouldn't do it again, miss, because it can't do any good—it was quite anxious about you and his servant asks after you every day. Really, it's quite fun to hear him, and Mary can't keep from laughing almost."

It might be fun to them, but it was death to poor Lurli, and never had her despair fallen so deeply upon her spirit as it did at this fresh revelation of villany.

If she called her wrongs from every window in the house, not a soul would stop longer than to express pity for her insanity!

(To be continued.)

CARRIAGES AND HORSES.—The Excise duty on carriages in the year ending March was 529,814*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.*, and 456,347*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.* on horses.

ROYAL ACQUIREMENTS.—Among the talents to which Royalty may claim, it is to be observed that the Queen of Holland has a most exquisite taste for literature, and writes with capacity and judgment; that the Empress of Germany is renowned for her eloquence, the Empress of Austria is considered to be the most beautiful woman in Europe, and the Queen of Denmark is remarkable for her polished manners and the way in which she receives her guests. As for our own Gracious Majesty, whatever may be the alleged faults of England and her politics she looked upon, by friend and foe, as a woman of womanly excellence.

PEOPLE'S FAILINGS.—A painter was once engaged upon a likeness of Alexander the Great. In one of his great battles Alexander had received an ugly scar on the side of his face. The artist was desirous of giving a correct likeness of the monarch, and, at the same time, hiding the scar. It was a difficult task. At length he hit upon a happy expedient. He painted him in a reflective attitude, his hand placed against his head, while his finger covered the scar. The best men are not without their failings—their scars—but do not dwell upon them. In speaking of them to others adopt the painter's expedient, and let the finger of love be placed upon the scar.

DISTINGUISHED FREEMASONS.—It is often said that Freemasonry is a secret society. So, possibly, it may be; but at all events it has been professed publicly in England by a long line of noble and Royal personages. The Prince of Wales is a

"Mason," so were the late Dukes of Sussex, York, Clarence, and Cumberland, and the Prince Regent; so in the previous generation were the Dukes of York and Gloucester. So, too, were the Emperor of Germany, in the year 1785, and our own King William III. fifty years earlier. And to go back farther still, we find that King Henry VI. was instituted a freemason in 1459; that nearly a hundred years earlier still, King Edward III. revised the Constitutions on Masonry, and, mounting higher still up the paths of history, we learn that Prince Edwin formed a Grand Lodge at York, in 926, the very year in which King Athelstan granted to the Freemasons a Royal Charter.

THE BLESSINGS OF THE RAIN.

BENEATH my feet the grass looks up.
To greet the cloud, long hath it laid
Withered and crisp, until the cup
Of rain revived each fainting blade.
For He who gives the crust and sup,
Answered the prayers of those who prayed.

The modest daisy, in its bloom,
The star-flower of the sunburnt hill,
Had nothing for the honeycomb,
Of the bronzed bee, that sought to fill
With bread for winter its own sweet home.
Trees languished, and the birds were still.

The thistle, with its head upraised,
In silence sending off its seeds,
Is coarsely clad and seldom praised;
Like labour, crowned with noiseless deeds,
Drinks in the rain, like one amazed
To find supplies for all his needs.

Nature, revived, again is glad,
Amid the glory of the scene,
Up to the clouds the hills are clad,
In hues of crimson, gold and green.
How can a human heart be sad
When clouds like angel-wings are seen?

Here, like the patriarch in his dream,
I see the ladder angels tread;
These mountains to my vision seem
To lift earth's gratitude to God.
I spell in smiling flowers the theme
Of praise writ on the teeming sod.

The wood bird's nest upon the bough
Is like a stricken heart that grieves;
'Twas full of sweet song once, but now
Deserted hangs, and filled with leaves;
Yet over all is arched the bow
Of promise our dear Father weaves.

How great the blessing of the rain,
"Silver sounding" everywhere!
Now who will say we ask in vain
For blessings when we bow in prayer?
Hark! I hear the wild bird's strain
Upon the palpitating air.

O. C.

LEAVES AND PLANTS.

We may recognize two leading shapes in all leaves—the circular and the linear. Mineralogists tell us that the numerous forms of crystals, in which all sorts of solid substances can be found, can be reduced to six elementary types. This is the more astonishing when we remember that some varieties—as for instance, carbonate of lime—are known to exhibit hundreds of distinct forms. Similarly, all the manifold shapes of the leaves of flowers and trees, that produce such a magnificent variety and richness, can be assigned to a few elementary patterns. The little pennywort of our marshes has leaves almost round. Those of the water-lily, nippewort, acornite, lady's mantle and nasturtium are circular. Some of these have indentations along the margin, and in the lady's mantle, oxalis, clover and lupin we see these carried down to the mid-rib, so that the leaves are cleft into three or four more parts. In the ribwort, plantain, heart's tongue, ferns and grasses generally we have a linear-shaped leaf, scalloped in the dandelion, and pinnated in the common polydop.

In a state of nature the terminal parts of plants are those which usually yield flowers. We have seen that the latter has only modified leaves, and that the extremities of plants cannot enjoy the abundant nutriment which the lower parts enjoy. The structure of the floral parts of plants is much simpler than that of the leaves, which are sometimes very peculiarly modified, or "specialized" as botanists would say. Hence many of our best philosophers have arrived at the conclusion that flowers have been formed through lack and not excess of nourishment. Just as we have leaves of every degree of shape, simple and compound, so have we flowers, in a natural condition, of every degree of perfection from a floral point of view. In some, as in the grasses, nettles and euphorbias, we have only stamens and pistils—male and female organs—without either sepals or petals. In others, as in the mus-

catel, we have sepals but no petals; and in the fuschia, crocus, tulip and others, we have other parts of the plant than the petals so highly coloured that they take their places, and are popularly believed to be the flowers.

It is now an established fact that plants which are self-fertilized are neither so healthy nor so large as those which have been crossed. This crossing is partly effected by the wind, and partly by insects; and the flowers fertilized in the former manner, as those of the poplar, pine, hazel, willow, etc., never possess bright-coloured petals, if indeed they have any corolla at all; while the flowers which are crossed by insect agency are always gaily coloured, and not unfrequently highly perfumed as well. Wind-fertilized plants always produce infinitely more pollen than is required, as may be seen in the early summer in any fir plantation, so that some of it is sure to be blown about. Many of the plants, such as the yucca, brought from other countries and acclimatized, will not seed, not because the climate or artificial conditions are unfavourable, but owing to the absence of those species of insects in this country to whose visits the plants are subjected in their native habitats. The marvellous adaptation of plants to insects, and of insects to plants, is now forming one of the most charming and wonderful investigations in natural history.

The act of flowering is so important to plants, in perpetuating their kind, that many of our earliest plants, such as the colt's-foot, butterbur, etc., flower before they leaf. This is the case also with fruit trees, whose buds, however, were formed in the previous autumn, when nutrition was failing. In some plants we have an auxiliary mode of propagation, as in the "runners" of the strawberry, which will creep along the ground and produce new plants without the trouble of flowering and seeding. This method of propagation is most fatally possessed by the American weed (Anacharis), which is supposed to have been introduced into England with Canadian timber some years ago, and has spread now into every canal and river so as to be a complete pest. And yet no instance is on record of this plant having flowered and seeded there. If the autumn be unusually antagonistic to vegetation, the buds then formed will be converted into flower buds instead of leaf buds. Every horticulturist knows that the process of "crippling" plants will transform leaf buds into flower buds, and this practice is often resorted to that more or larger fruit may be obtained.

The spaces along the stems of a plant, separating the whorls of leaves from each other, are called "internodes." These spaces may be longer or shorter, or may be suppressed altogether; and if the reader will remember this when next he compares the general shapes of plants, he will be supplied with one reason, at least, why they differ from each other. Thus, take a daisy or a China aster; you think each to be a flower, but after you have pulled away all the surrounding white petals of the former, you come to the yellow disk, and are then surprised to find it crowded with hundreds, if not thousands, of diminutive but quite perfect flowers, each provided with separate floral organs. The internodes, which ought to have separated these flowers, have been suppressed, and thus they grow squally or compositely. There is reason to believe that plants like these, which have undergone the most specialization and alteration, are among the most ancient, geologically speaking, of all the flower-bearing species.

It is now stated that the marriage of the Princess Louise of Belgium and Prince Phillip of Saxe Coburg Gotha will not take place till next year.

A STATUE of the Queen has been erected in St. Thomas's Hospital, Lambeth. The statue is placed at the foot of the grand staircase, and represents Her Majesty in her State chair holding the sceptre upon her shoulder by the right hand, an orb being in her left. The statue, which is of solid marble, is the gift of Sir John Musgrave, the President of the Hospital, and is the work of Mr. Noble.

DOMESTIC MISTAKES.—"Never be ashamed to apologize when you have done wrong in domestic affairs," says an eminent divine. "Let that be a law of your household. The best thing I ever heard of my grandfather, whom I never saw, was this: that once having unrighteously rebuked one of his children, he himself—having lost his patience, and, perhaps, having been misinformed of the child's doings—found out his mistake, and in the evening of the same day gathered all his family together, and said, 'Now I have one explanation to make and one thing to say. Thomas, this morning I rebuked you very unfairly; I am sorry for it. I rebuked you in the presence of the whole family, and now I ask your forgiveness in their presence.' It must have taken some courage to do that. It was right, was it not? Never be ashamed to apologize for domestic inaccuracy."



[GRIEF OR REMORSE?]

WHEN THE SHIP COMES HOME.

CHAPTER XXI.

Some that smile have in their hearts, I fear,
Millions of mischief, *Shakespeare.*

IN that moment of darkness and solitude when Frank was whispering words of fondness in Ellen's willing ear an assassin's hand had hovered above his head, and the deed, foul and ugly as it was, had been all but done. While the deafening crash still lingered in the air Frank staggered and fell, stricken down senseless.

When the affrighted servants clustered round their young master, over whose recumbent form Ellen clung in the wildest agony of despair, they saw a wound in his fair brow, from which the blood was trickling and staining his white face.

But even while they were devising means to convey him into the house he showed signs of returning consciousness.

"Nell! Oh!" he murmured, looking up confused and bewildered.

"Frank, my poor darling!"

"Ah! are you hurt?"

"No, my love."

"Heaven be praised!"

"Nell, tell the men to search the grounds, but not to summon any assistance. It may be better that this should not be known."

The coachman, who had served Frank for so many years, had already commenced searching over the grounds. But no one could be seen; no one had been seen from the first instant.

Down by a cluster of shrubs, a few inches from the wall that overlooked the garden, and only some nine or ten feet from where Francis Hopetown lay, the coachman picked up a revolver which had evidently exploded. The barrel was twisted and wrenched partly from the stock, and two of the chambers rent and cracked like an eggshell.

The coachman, by the aid of a stable lantern, traced marks of blood on the wall and also on the stock of the deadly instrument.

"Foul work," he said, with an Englishman's honest abhorrence of such a cowardly action. "He's had a judgment on him anyway. He's suffered more than master, the murderous villain."

He followed Frank, who was being led into the house, and mentioned his discovery.

"But for that unforeseen accident the bullet would have fulfilled its deadly mission. My time is not come, I suppose," Frank said, with a melancholy smile. "But—"

There he checked himself, as if not wishing to raise any conjectures. But Ellen had guessed his passing thought, and finished the sentence for him.

"Who could have done it? What motive could any one have in injuring you, my dear Frank?" She was very pale and her lips trembled as she spoke. "The deed will come home to the evil doer."

"He made good his escape, Nell. Well, perhaps it is better so. I must tell the servants to say as little as possible about this. We are likely never to find out who the would-be assassin was. Thank Heaven, I am no worse. This is a mere scratch. I will baste it."

"Will you see a doctor, Frank?"

"No," he said, with a smile. "The wound is only skindeep. I have had many worse ones at college."

And then he became moody and thoughtful. This attempt, in spite of its miserable failure, told him that his life was in danger. The man who could do or meditate an act of that kind would not relinquish his horrid purpose through the failure of the weapon.

The thought which troubled him most of all was who could it be? A common house-robber or footpad would not have done it. Could it have been some desperate ruffian paid by his enemies, amongst whom were Marcus and Ruhl? Would Ruhl do such a thing?

Frank did not moot the question to Ellen. He instinctively felt that it would be a painful one to her.

The servants were told to keep the affair a secret as far as it was possible, and Frank, having well examined the exploded revolver, put it carefully away. The treacherous weapon seemed to be entirely a new one, but it bore neither maker's name nor mark.

The next morning Frank was up and evidently as well as ever. Ellen had placed some goldbeater's skin over the wound, which her love had magnified into a desperate affair.

"Birdie," said Frank, "don't forget that we must be up and away. I am not going to risk having you shot at next."

"Why more here than elsewhere?" answered Ellen, with one of her critical and inquiring glances.

"You have given me a poser there, Nell," laughed Frank, though it had been on the tip of his tongue to remark that if this unseen friend had not known where to find them he could not have made this attempt on Frank's life.

"You will not stay here after I am gone, Frank?"

"No. Between John's club, my chambers and you my time will be pretty well occupied without

wasting any of it here. Besides, without you this house would be a dungeon."

"Come, Frank, I shall begin to think I am being courted by a cavalier of old," said Ellen, with a flush and a smile, both indications of extreme pleasure.

"Why, birdie, men should be the same now as in past ages. Manner and dress have changed, but can we not love the same and as tenderly?"

"I trust so, my dear Frank."

"You may rely upon it, Nell, that the great barrier to happiness in matrimonial circles is the want of sentiment. Men are stupid enough to imagine a little honest, outspoken affection beneath them, and naturally grow cool and restrained, and their wives gradually but surely drift into the same cold and formal mood, checking every little action that would betray one of those tender impulses of the heart a woman so often longs to make known, but is restrained for fear the show of affection should be ill-timed, or passé, or unwelcome."

Ellen's mind, going back to the days when her father occupied the dull house at Kennington, gave an involuntary sigh.

"Yes," she said, "I have seen that myself. A more gentle or fonder-hearted woman cannot exist than my mamma; my darling father was a good and affectionate man, but they had both drifted into the mere parents of their children, equally making sacrifices for the one end only—us; but remaining themselves, one the placid and obedient, too silent and contented wife, the other an almost apathetic, satisfied husband, willing to make any sacrifice where the means were in his power for the benefit of those about him. Yet I am sure my parents loved each other dearly and purely, but had grown beyond, in their graver years, the pleasure of expressing their affection perhaps too openly."

"But don't you think, birdie, there can be such a thing as a deeper, a graver and therefore almost sublimer love than the touchy, fretful, jealous passion indulged in by two children like ourselves?"

"How? True love is positive."

"Truly; but true love can even deepen, grow more sweetly intense when the days of exhausting the vocabulary of fond epithets and loveable adjectives, when the hopes and fears are over, and we see the past—our past—coming back upon us in the offspring about us, and we rest tranquil and almost silent in the sweet enjoyment of each other's love, too long and perhaps too sorely tried to ever be doubted, and jealousy surrenders unconditionally to the loftier and sweeter goddess Faith."

"One period is the love, the expectations, ambi-

tions, and apprehensions; the other is tranquillity. I can only liken them to an ardent young soldier preparing for the battle, full of joy, golden dreams, and grand aspirations; and the same when he has retired—the honours won, the battles over. He could not win them again, though in the quiet hours of reverie I could imagine him relating every incident one by one, and in his mind going through the life that had brought him contentment, honourable rest, and tranquil old age. I wonder if many persons lament the past?

"Do you, birdie?"

"No; I only lament that I did not make more of it, appreciate better the thousand and one little nameless happinesses when it was the present."

"Make amends now; give this present its real value and be happy, my pet."

"I am, Frank; so happy that sometimes I wonder if it can last."

"Why not?"

Ellen shook her head, and glanced down at the carpet.

"Never anticipate miseries, Nell. When they come we must fight them down. Come, pet, chocolate will be brought up in ten minutes."

"I had forgotten, dear. I shall not keep you waiting; I shall be ready as soon as you have prepared for the journey."

"No hurry for half an hour. Tell Dyer she is to accompany you; she is awfully forgetful of late—perhaps she's in love."

"Then I can forgive her," laughed Ellen; and Frank laughed, too, as he kissed the lovely girl and left the room, and Ellen rang for Dyer.

The event of the previous night had caused Ellen to forget one thing—the copy of her brother's letter. She remembered it now.

"Never mind," she thought, "I will read it in the carriage going along."

Ellen was not so sorry now for the coming change of residence. If the weather was any guide, or to be taken as at all prophetic, her future should have been bright enough. The morning turned out a lovely one; the mists rising off the river before eleven o'clock disclosed a cloudless sky, and the earth and water were aglow with the light of the yellow sun.

The man-servant, Cottell, was to take the boxes in the Newport Pagnall, which was used now only for light cart duties; Dyer was to accompany him. The cook and housekeeper, an elderly woman, was already in the house.

"Shall we drive to the palace?" asked Frank, when the brougham was ready for their departure.

"Buckingham?" inquired Ellen, laughing at her own slyness.

"Some day," said Francis, quite gravely; "at present I mean that marvel of glass expanse and entertainment at Sydenham; we may as well spend an hour or two there."

"Thanks, dear, I should like it."

The wound, such as it was, his hat entirely covered. Ellen called his attention to this fact and he only smiled in response.

"Frank," she said, "in the horror and excitement of last night I forgot to say that my poor little loving sister brought me a copy of a letter, which had quite lately arrived and which perhaps I never should have seen but for the courage and devotion of Amy."

"Yes, I quite long to be introduced to that little gipsy queen. She is a brave little woman."

"I think I will take this opportunity to read it, Frank. I am rather anxious and curious."

"My pet, pray do so. I shall enjoy a cigarette."

Ellen took the copy of her brother's letter out of her pocket and read it carefully through.

"He seems to have gone through great hardships with the survey people out there."

"So I suppose, poor fellow."

"At times," Ellen read from the letter, "the life we had to lead in the bush, away from all or any kind of civilization, was simply repugnant to a gentleman and outraged every feeling. Our scanty kits exhausted, wading through filthy swamps for five or six miles, and then not even a change of socks; at other times trackless snow and dirty fens for a fortnight. Ugh! I shudder when I recall it. When we got back to Montreal I resigned and went with two fellows to the mining-fields of America. We have been fortunate, and I am coming home."

"Your brother must have seen something of the world; I almost envy him."

Ellen went on reading the letter. It contained some very tender passages touching upon his father's memory, and expressed the most tender consideration for the plight the family must be left in.

"Never mind, keep up, and I'll put matters ship-shape when I come home," he wrote, "and Nell shall be a lady, so shall Amy, when she's old enough."

When she gave the letter to Frank to read he ob-

served one passage in it which Ellen had not paid the slightest attention to in her comments. It ran:

"I am pleased to think you have for a lodger such a nice fellow as the original of the photograph enclosed to me; still I should not make too free with him. I wish his portrait was more like your written description of him. I don't know why, but there is something in the face for which, if it is in the original, I shall mistrust him. He looks to me like a man with a hidden purpose, and one who would work that purpose out without the aid or the confidence of a friend."

"This is a singular passage concerning your friend Ruhl," said Frank.

"It perplexes me," answered Ellen. "I have been pondering over it and trying to remember whether there was any such impression forced upon me at any time."

"And was there?"

"I don't remember one. Charles Ruhl seemed very much above the average of young men of our day. Thoughtful, energetic, quiet and good-hearted; earnest in his religion and indulgent in suffering the opinions of others."

"Upon my word, birdie, I really ought to be jealous; what would you say if I were to draw such a picture of some lady friend?"

"I should be glad to hear it; one's friends cannot be too good."

"Then I must take this friend of yours to be all but perfect?"

"No; I describe what he seemed."

"Very well; and now shall I give you my impression of what he seemed?"

"Do, Frank."

"Well, simply, he, to me, seemed the kind of man who would pretend ignorance if it suited his purpose to let you think you were his superior in knowledge or worldly smartness; a man who could hide his thoughts and his purpose behind that radiant smile; a man who could not take a friend by the arm and say: 'I am going to do this or that.' He would do it slyly and smile at your surprise at finding that he had accomplished a purpose."

Ellen was silent for a long time it seemed to Frank, a shade was on her brow, and at last, resting her hand on Frank's arm, she looked very earnestly in his face as she put this question to him:

"Frank, tell me honestly, without reserve, whom you suspect attempted your destruction?"

"I cannot in justice, without a grain of evidence before me, suspect any one."

"That, my dearest Frank, is an evasion. Who has ever given you cause to consider him an enemy?"

"I hardly know my enemies. There is only one man who, with the face of a demon, white, stone-like and resolute, threatened to kill me."

"And he?"

Frank fancied that Ellen's voice trembled as she asked this.

"Charles Ruhl, my pet," he answered, quietly.

"Oh, heavens, no! Do not say, Frank, that you suspect my mother's friend, my little sister's companion and protector! If I really thought him capable of such a thing they should know of it at home. I could not let a man with such a nature remain under my mother's roof."

"Nell," said Frank, "it is an affair that will possibly remain a mystery for ever. Let us not recur to it again. For your sake as well as mine let us forget it."

He went on reading the letter, from which, and the photograph he had seen of him, he could pretty well guess the sort of man Mr. Edward Temple was.

"A sturdy, right-minded, strong-armed gentleman, who would make his way in the world if he had to commence at the bottom of a coal mine. I think I shall like him," he said, and Ellen was pleased to hear it.

She could not help feeling some regret when she thought that he might return even in a few weeks, and perhaps she would not meet him for a long, long time to come.

Still, all her considerations were for Frank now, she was happy with him, and there was much to make her happy. Her new home contained every luxury that love and money could bring her; she had a pair of gray ponies and an elegant little Victoria.

Frank was compelled to be absent a good deal, but she knew it was for both their sakes. A report had gone abroad that he was married, and he had to be careful.

There is one thing to be mentioned in parentheses: When he made inquiries concerning Ruhl he learned that Charles had left London on the day previous to the night when he was shot at.

Ruhl had gone on the Continent, and would be absent a few weeks. Another curious incident can be mentioned here. When Charles Ruhl did return

after an absence of nearly a month he brought back a letter from John Hartpool, who, in consequence of the acquisition of a little independency, begged to resign his appointment.

He had acquitted himself with much tact and integrity, and the firm regretted his loss. He had begged Messrs. Saxton, Coburg and Co., to forgive him not returning and resigning in person, but he did not intend returning to England for some years to come, and took the opportunity of settling matters with Mr. Ruhl, knowing him to be a responsible member of the firm.

When Ruhl returned to the dull house at Kennington there was a marked change in him, a restless, haggard look; his cheeks were sunken, and the whole expression of his face was that of a man suddenly branded by the iron fingers of care.

Amy looked at him wistfully, tearfully, the alteration in him gave her a heart-pang which she could not, nor tried to, conceal.

"Oh, Charles! how ill you look! How you change! What is the matter?"

"Do I change so much?" he said, and turning his face towards the pier glass, he contemplated his features with a grave, sad smile.

"Do you not feel changed?" said Amy, who was growing old womanly, strangely, noticeably old.

"Yes, little woman," answered Ruhl, drawing her to his side and sitting down, breathing a long, weary sigh. "Yes, Amy, I do feel changed. Heaven help me! I seem to care for nothing, to find no pleasure in the world now."

Amy's eyes sank and a flush stole into her cheeks; a moment later and they were pale as death.

"I feel that I have nothing to live for."

"Nothing, Charles, not your ship which you told me was on the way?"

"The ship, Amy," he said, bitterly, "may be lost for what I care. The storms and tempests of life may wreck me on the dark rock of death. To think it has been done all—all for nothing!"

He dropped his face in his hands and rested his elbows on his knees and went on almost inaudibly, unintelligibly:

"Yes, all for nothing; scheming, racking, fighting through a sea of difficulties, carrying my boat and such a vessel. Ah, and she for whom I have sacrificed so much can never share my—"

And then his unintelligible muttering drifted into gloomy, silent thought, and a dark, despairing shadow settled on his brow.

Mrs. Temple entered the room just then. She had a letter in her hand, which she had brought up from the breakfast-room. She gave the letter to Charles; he tore open the envelope, and as he read the few lines therein a hot, hectic flush mounted his pallid cheek.

The letter was from the solicitors, trustees of the John Hopetown estates, and he read it aloud.

"DEAR SIR,—We beg to state that in compliance with the wishes of our client we have paid into the London and County Bank to your account the sum of ten thousand pounds, and remain

"Your obedient servants," etc.

The cry of joy Amy was about to utter was checked, and she gave vent to one of pain and alarm; Charles had only just removed his gloves, and starting forward she caught him by the right hand.

"Oh, Charles, poor dear, what have you done?"

His right hand was scarred and seared, as if from dreadful scalds, or still more dreadful burns.

CHAPTER XXII.

Will creep in service where it cannot go.

Shakespeare.

It was as well perhaps that none saw how the dark, trouble-laden clouds were gathering in their tempestuous fury to wreck the happiness of Francis Hopetown and Ellen, and work out the gloomy destiny of those so strangely mixed up with their young lives. It is far better, perhaps, that we cannot foresee the coming storm in our uncertain lives. But the clouds were gathering rapidly and ominously, all the more to be dreaded for the full before the storm.

Never had Ellen been so happy as she was at the handsome villa at Sydenham. It wanted but a short time when Frank would be of age, and he had already spoken gaily of the event—of what he would do then.

"I shall be master of Craythorpe," he said, "We will go down together, Nell. The tenants shall receive their new mistress and myself with a festival. The church bells shall ring and the villagers rejoice, as they did in the old days—as they would had I been eldest son of their late master just come of age, and then shall commence that life for which I have so much longed—a life of usefulness, and activity and you will help me."

"When I have learned my duties, Frank, dearest. What a splendid thing to be mistress of Craythorpe, with plenty of money to do good with. Oh, I should

never tire of trying to help the tenantry in sickness or distress, to try by advice and precept to better their moral being and their homes. It would be a life worth living—a glorious, Heaven-seeking life—with a purpose that would make every hour one of sweet existence."

"So you shall, my pet. I would rather that than spend all our days in a whirl of thoughtlessness and extravagance, which we should certainly do if we made ourselves conspicuous in society; a little of it is well enough, too much is pernicious."

"How glad I am to find that you are not changed, darling Frank, that you still cling to those principles which made me trust you, and then love you as I ever shall, as I hope I may be allowed to for a long, long time to come."

"Heaven willing, my pet," answered Frank, embracing her as fondly as he had done in the days of their first love dream. "If I am not home to-night you will know, Nell, that important business is detaining me."

"Frank, I am so much long to know whether Ned is come home. May I write to Amy and ask an answer to be sent to a post-office at Brixton—or elsewhere?"

"If I cannot bring you tidings of him from those who must know, then, my pet, you shall. Nell, I should not mind your brother knowing all, for I am sure he could be trusted."

"Oh, I am sure he could, Frank, and I am so pleased to hear you speak so kindly of him."

"My dear child, he is your brother."

"And yet you would not favour Amy thus far."

"She is a child, too young to be in the confidence of a sister and hold a secret from a mother. Come, my pet, the day promises to be a fine one; walk to the Crystal Palace with Dyer. Cottell can fetch you at five o'clock. You may see some tridles there—I know you are fond of them—about the place."

"Very well, Frank. I am fond of studying faces and characters, and that is not a bad place for such studies. I will go for an hour when I take my walk."

Frank started for the west then. He went on horseback. He kept a stout nag for saddle purposes. There was room for it in the town mews if he wanted to stay, so he found this particular whim no trouble to him.

It is wonderful what trifling incidents bring about great events in our little lives.

Ellen, as the day gave every promise to keep fine, walked as far as the palace accompanied by her maid Dyer, who was sort of companion too. There is always a charm of attraction in the innumerable sights and curiosities at the Crystal Palace, and she never lacked interest in going there.

The first two hours she spent in the grounds and then entered the splendid building, lingering at the bazaar stalls, making purchases whenever she came across anything like a novelty in ornaments for house or person.

At one time she missed Dyer, who, attracted by something more suited to her yearning curiosity, had for the moment failed to follow up her young mistress. Ellen turned partly round to look after her when she heard a quick patter of feet and a voice, too familiar, at this moment cry out:

"Ellen, Ellen!"

And in an instant Amy, flushed and excited, was in her arms.

Ellen's heart sank; she expected to see her mother's stricken, pale face next, and almost dreaded to look round.

Mrs. Temple did not appear. But a gentleman, with a swarthy complexion and with a look of wonder upon his face, was rapidly approaching her.

"Look, Ellen, that's Ned," cried Amy, dragging her towards him. "He has been home a week."

"Nell, is it you? I scarcely knew you. How you have changed! Well, old girl, I could have wished that we had met under other circumstances. However, you are still Nell to me."

"Oh, Ned," said Ellen, kissing him, with tears in her eyes. "Don't speak and look like that! You shall know all. You may come home with me. Frank told me that you should be the third party in this miserable secret."

"But this ought to have been no secret. Never mind that now. You look well. Let us stroll out in the grounds."

Edward Temple offered his sister his arm; Amy went to the other side of him, and they walked out of the building, followed at a respectful distance by Dyer.

He was a fine young fellow was Edward, looking some years older than his actual age, elegantly and strongly built, and with some of Ellen's good looks and grace of bearing, in spite of the life he had led.

"Nell," he said, abruptly, "you don't look a girl who's gone to the bad."

"Ned—Ned, how can you say that?"

"Well, what was I to think after all I have heard?"

"Think nothing but the best of me, that I am still your sister and have acted as I thought best for myself and my future and for him I love dearer than my own life."

"Upon my word, Nell, I begin to think that mother and the rest of them are all wrong, that there is some little mystery which only wants clearing up."

"And the time is not far distant, Ned," said Ellen, with a glad smile. The conversation of the morning with Frank was still fresh in her memory. "It is a sign of the commonplace scepticism of our day."

"What is, Nell?"

"Putting an infamous construction upon a woman's actions because her faith and her love are put to the test, because she deems the man of her choice worthy the sacrifice of public opinion and the applause of friends whose friendship rarely stands testing."

"Possibly. But then these days are matter-of-fact, even love—"

"Is an acted falsehood sometimes—too often," interrupted Ellen, with her old proud spirit making itself heard. "However much the people of the world may have changed, love is a divine passion in the pure—to those who try to think right. Love is sacred, as it ever should be. If there is mutual love, love as I have always taught myself to see it, then let those who bear a pure and sacred love for each other prepare to make mutual sacrifices and renounce the dearest ties and world for each other's sakes."

"Rather lofty notions, old girl, such as have taken many a simpering little simpleton to the bottom of the river."

"The fault in most cases of vanity or slumbering viciousness," answered Ellen, harshly.

"You do not seem disposed to be merciful to our fallen sisters?"

"No; a woman who has not moral strength, and thinks and knows she has not, to fight her own battle, should never blindly trust a man's promises until she has found the man true and deserving trust."

"Which you have? Something like criticism in that?"

"My dearest Ned," Ellen glanced down at the green carpet lying beneath her feet and toyed with her parasol. "I asked you for a short time, until we leave here, not to connect me with our discourse. However, I will answer you now. I have found one who could be trusted, whose soul is truth and poetry, whose sentiments are of the age of chivalry."

"If he is anything like John Hopetown he is a good man."

"You have seen Frank's cousin?"

"Yes, in Canada—I met him at Ottawa."

"Not since his arrival?"

"No. I should like to. I intend to, for we were bosom friends, poor fellow."

"You say that sadly?"

"I feel sad when I remember his heartbroken, dispirited, purposeless life, weary, wifeless, childless, with only one craving, to join the fragile mother and gentle children whom he loved to madness."

"But I hear quite different accounts of him now. He seems gay, brilliant in speech, dashing and reckless."

"Then," said Edward Temple, solemnly, "it is not the John Hopetown I knew. One or the other must be an impostor."

Ellen was surprised.

"What can make you think that?"

"My knowledge of one and the rumours concerning the other."

"But Ruhl could show you him. Let him ask John Hopetown if he remembers you."

"Oh, dear, no. I have rather strange notions on this subject, and Ruhl is the particular person to whom I shall not communicate my knowledge of John Hopetown."

"My dear Ned, you perplex me. At present you are to me a book of Euclid. I must let this topic rest for another time. Let us go out now. Where's Dyer?"

"Who's Dyer?"

"Ah, here she is!" answering herself rather than Edward. "Dyer, take this parcel of trifles, and also my sister, Miss Amy; hire one of the cabs outside, and drive home. I shall follow at once, with Mr. Temple."

"Yes, ma'am."

"What time did you order my Victoria?"

"Little before five."

"Thanks. Amy, my darling, go with Dyer. I want to speak to Edward alone. I shall follow you at once."

She kissed Amy and handed her over to Dyer, who sailed off, full of marvel at the singular rencontre and admiration for the good looks of Mr. Temple.

Ellen and her brother left the palace by the centre transept. Outside stood her elegant Victoria and grays. A porter opened the door and she stepped in, beckoning Edward to follow.

"By Jove!" said Edward, when they were dashing down Sydenham hill, "the fellow doesn't stint you, Nell."

"I have all his heart, Ned; his wealth, therefore, is a second consideration, and is lavished upon me."

"He will be of age soon?"

"Very soon."

"Now, old lady, I should like some little explanation, anything that is satisfactory, and I stand your friend and his too."

Ellen sat silent for a few moments and then began to tell her brother the brief and romantic history of her first love, the obstacle in the way of an open marriage which he already knew, and of her mother's persistent persecution in Charles Ruhl's favour.

"I am glad you did not have Ruhl, Nell."

"Don't you like him?"

"No."

"He is still at home?"

"Yes; in consideration of past kindness one cannot be uncivil to the fellow. He has lately come into a fortune; by what means rests between Heaven and himself as yet."

"He used to say his ship would come home some day."

"Yes; but there are many ships—pirates' ships, you know. Well, go on."

"How far did I get?"

"Two young folks awfully in love with each other and for no other reason than that they intend to elope."

"Mamma drove me to it. I told her though I was very fond of Charles, I could never love him, and I would not marry him."

"Ruhl was wrong to press his suit. But he is phlegmatic and pig-headed, like another little party."

"Of whom do you speak?"

"Amy. That child is blindly in love with Ruhl."

For some reason—no one knew less the reason than Ellen herself—she turned cold all over at this announcement.

"I have taken her under my charge now," continued Edward, and that is the reason I brought her down here to-day."

"Can it be possible?"

"Egad! I have watched her pretty closely."

"And he?"

"Oh, Ruhl does not seem to see it at all. He is very, very proud of her as a dear little sister, I will give the fellow credit for that, and seems to have taken my place pretty well with her in that respect; but she is mad."

"And she must be taken away from home?"

"I don't think that would be an effectual remedy."

"Why?"

"Because Amy, young as she is, would defy us—would break loose from all restraint, would follow him to the world's end. You have heard of girls becoming soldiers and sailors?"

"Yes."

"Well, hers is such a nature, and we cannot be too careful how we treat her. What place is that?"

"Glynn House, where I live."

"Then we are soon there, and you have not let me into the little mystery yet."

"There is little more to tell."

"One of two things, Nell, and both sadly wrong," said Edward Temple, very gloomily. "If he married you in secret to retain his property, he and you are all concerned have been guilty of fraud; if you have risked your honour on his promise, you are a disgrace to the Temples, and never shall be recognised again. Which is it; are you his wife?"

(To be continued.)

AMONG the last fashionable arrivals in Paris is that of "General Dot," the rival of Tom Thumb. The gallant dwarf is of German origin, and his unprofessional name is Leopold Kahn. He was born in San Francisco, of parents of giant proportions. The new "general" weighs 18lbs. He is said to have made a fortune in America with Barium.

THE Ritualists are carrying on their war on the Episcopal bench in a most relentless fashion. Their latest discovery is that the Archbishop of Canterbury has never been "validly baptised," and the startling intelligence has been communicated with an air of triumph to one of the Ritualistic prints. According to this authority, the only baptismal ceremony which Dr. Tait ever underwent was at the hands of an "old and ignorant Scotch nurse when he was an infant and in danger of death." If Dr. Tait was never baptised by an Episcopalian clergyman, the Ritualists will hold that his ordination and consecration are invalid.

THE RULING PASSION.—A woman's love is ever uppermost in her mind. Sleeping it fills her dreams,

on waking it is her first thought in the moment of life's imminent danger, still—still, it is the uppermost sentiment, especially if the object of her love is her umbrella. For instance, a lady, fat, fair, and forty, had recently a narrow escape from being killed in the Citadel Station, Carlisle. She fell over the platform while the train was coming in, and was rescued lying on her back in the four-foot under the engine, whence she was extricated from her perilous position uninjured, notwithstanding that she had been dragged several yards by the engine, a bar at the bottom of which she had firmly grasped with both hands. Upon being lifted upon the platform again, her first words were: "Where's my umbrella?"

CAST ON THE WORLD.

CHAPTER XIX.

"Yes, I remember her well," answered Geraldine. "She asked several questions, too, about the girl who was to be married—which was your room and all that. Why? What of her?"

"Nothing much," returned Mildred. "How did she look?"

"Like a beggar," returned Geraldine. "Tall, spare, angular, with a pock-marked face, a single long tooth projecting over her under-lip, and a black bonnet. I thought I saw her going down the road just at dusk to-night, but might have been mistaken."

Mildred turned pale at the very idea of having ever been associated with such a creature, or of meeting her alone at the deserted cottage, and she was trying to think of some excuse to render Geraldine for having thus questioned her, when one of the dressmakers came to the rescue and called Miss Veille away.

"What do you think now?" Mildred asked of the old man when they were alone.

"Think as I did before," he replied. "We won't go near the woman. We don't want to know who you are."

"But," and drawing nearer to him, Mildred looked wistfully in his face; "but what if I am somebody whom Lawrence mustn't marry? Wouldn't it be better to know it before it's too late?"

"Heaven and earth, child," returned Mr. Wilton. "Do you think anything can induce him to give you up? Wouldn't you marry him if he was anything short of a man?"

This remark was suggestive, and Mildred chimed in:

"I'll ask Rachael about that woman. She saw her, too."

Hurrying off to the kitchen she found the old woman, whose story agreed exactly with Geraldine's, except, indeed, that she described the stranger as worse looking even than Miss Veille had done.

"I saw such a person in the street to-night," said Lucy, who was present, while her little child, six years old, testified stoutly to having seen a woman with a big bonnet in the hall.

"Thinks she'll get some money," growled the old man, when Mildred repeated this to him; "but we'll cheat her. If she knows who you are, let her come boldly and tell, and not entice you into the woods. There's mischief somewhere."

But fruitless were all his efforts to convince Mildred. The more she thought of it, the more excited she grew, and the more anxious she became to meet a person who could tell her of her parentage—of her mother, maybe; the mother she had never known, but had dreamed of many and many a time.

"Go to bed," Mr. Wilton said, at last. "You'll feel differently in the morning."

Mildred obeyed so far as going to bed was concerned, but the morning found her more impatient than she had been the previous night and not even Oliver, to whom she confided the story, had the power to quiet her. Go to the deserted but she would, and if she old man would not accompany her she would go alone, she said.

So it was at last decided that both the old man and Oliver should act as her escort, by means of insuring her greater safety, and then, with a feverish restlessness, Mildred counted the lagging hours, taking no interest in anything, not even in the bridal dress, which was this day finished and tried on.

Very, very beautiful she looked in it, with the orange blossoms resting amid the braids of her nut-brown hair, but she scarcely heeded it for the terrible something which whispered to her continually: "You will never wear it—never."

Then as her vivid imagination pictured that old woman, her mother, and herself lying dead in the deserted hut just as she surely should do, her face grew so white that Geraldine asked in alarm what was the matter.

"Nothing much," she answered, as she threw off the bridal dress. "I am low-spirited to-day."

"You'll have a letter to-night, maybe, and that will make you feel better," suggested Geraldine.

"I hope so," returned Milly, and fearful lest Geraldine, whom all the day she had tried to avoid, should speak again of the woman, she ran off upstairs, and indulged in a good, hearty cry, glancing often over her shoulder as if afraid there was some goblin there, come to rob her of happiness.

Never once, however, did she waver in her resolution of going to the hut, and just after the sun went down she presented herself to Mr. Wilton, asking if he were ready.

"Ready for what? Oh, I know, that wild-geese chase. Yes, I'm ready."

And getting his hat and cane, they started, stopping for Oliver, who even then tried to dissuade Mildred from going.

But he could not, and in almost unbroken silence the three went on their way, Mildred a little in advance, with a white, stony look upon her face, as if she had made up her mind to bear the worst, and it was well she had.

It was a tumble-down old cottage, which for many years had been uninhabited save by the bats and the swallows, which darted through the wide chinks in the crumbling wall, or plunged down the dilapidated chimney, filling the weird ruin with strange unearthly sounds, and procuring for it the reputation of being haunted ground. The path leading to it was long and tedious, for after leaving the river bridge it wound around the base of a hill, beneath the huge forest trees, which now in the dusky twilight threw their grim shadows over every near object, and insensibly affected the spirits of the three who came each moment nearer and nearer to the hut.

"There, Clubs and I will stay here," said the old man, stopping beneath a tall hemlock, which grew within a dozen rods of the building.

Mildred made no answer, but moved resolutely on until she had crossed the threshold of the cottage, where she involuntarily paused, while a nameless feeling of terror crept over her, everything around her was so gloomy and so still.

In the farthest extremity of the apartment a single spot of moonlight, shining through the rafters above, fell upon the old-fashioned cupboard, from which two rats, startled by Mildred's steps, sprang out, and running across the floor, disappeared in the vicinity of the broad stone hearth. Aside from this there was no sign of life, and Mildred was beginning to think of turning back, when a voice, between a whisper and a hiss, came to her ear from the dark corner where the shadows lay deepest, and where a human form crouched upon the floor.

"Mildred Wilton," the voice said, "is that you?"

Instantly Mildred grasped the oaken mantel to keep herself from falling; for, with that question, the human form arose and came so near to her that the repulsive face was plainly visible.

"You tremble," the figure said; "but you need not be afraid. I am not here to hurt you. I loved your mother too well for that."

There was magic in that word, and it unlocked at once the daughter's heart and divested it of all fear. Just then the moon passed from under a cloud, and, looking in through a paneless window, shone full upon the eager, expectant face of the beautiful young girl, with, grasping the hand of the strange old woman, said, imploringly:

"Did you really know my mother—my own mother?"

"Yes," returned the woman; "I knew her well. I was with her when she died. I laid her in the coffin. I followed her to the grave, carrying you in my arms, and then I did with you what she bade me do—I laid you at Mr. Wilton's door, and stood watching in the rain until he took you in."

She spoke rapidly, and, to Oliver, who had drawn so near that he could distinctly hear the whole, it seemed as if she were repeating some lesson learned by rote; but Mildred had no such thought, and pressing the bony arm, she asked:

"But who am I? What is my name? Who was my father? and am I like my mother?"

"That's what I've been trying to make out," returned the woman, peering closer into her face, and adding, after a minute survey: "Not like her at all. You are more like the Wiltons; and well you may be, for your poor mother wore her knees almost to the bone praying that you might resemble them."

"Then I am a Wilton!—I am a Wilton! and Richard was my father! Oh, joy, joy!" and the wild, glad cry went ringing through the ghostly ruin, as Mildred thus gave vent to what she had so long and secretly cherished in her heart.

"Mildred"—and in the old woman's voice there was something which made the young girl shudder—"there is not a drop of Wilton blood in all your veins; but look!" drawing from her bosom a worn, soiled letter, she held it up in the moonlight, saying:

"This your mother wrote two days before she died. It does not belong to you, for it is intended for your grandfather. I promised to give it to him, should it ever be necessary for him to know; but you may read it, girl. It will explain the whole better than I can."

"How can I read it here?" Mildred asked. And her companion replied by striking a match across the hearth, and lighting a bit of candle, which she brought from the depths of her pocket.

Holding it between her thumb and finger, she said:

"You see I've come prepared; but sit down, child. You'll need to, maybe, before you get through."

And she pushed a block of wood towards Mildred, who sat down, while all through her frame the icy chills were running, as if she saw the fearful gulf her feet were treading.

"Tell me first one thing," she said, grasping the woman's dress. "Tell me, am I greatly inferior to Lawrence Thornton?"

Oh, that horrid, horrid smile, which broke over the old woman's face!

"You are fully Lawrence Thornton's equal."

"Then I can bear anything," said Mildred; and opening the letter she pressed to her lips the delicate, though rather uneven handwriting, said to have been her mother's.

It was dated nearly eighteen years before, and its contents were as follows:

"DEAR, DEAR FATHER: Though you cast me off and turned me from your door, you are very dear to me; and should these lines ever come to you, pray think kindly of the erring child whose fault was loving one so unworthy of her, for I did love Charlie, and I love him yet, although he has cruelly deserted me just when I need his care the most. Father, I am dying; dying all alone in this great city. Charlie is gambling, drinking, and utterly forgetting me, who gave up everything for him."

"On the pillow beside me lies my little girl-baby; and when I look at her I wish that I might live, but, as that cannot be, I must do for her the best I can. Charlie said to me when he went away, that after baby was born he should come back and take her from me, so as to extort money from you, and he would do it, too, if he had an opportunity, but I'd rather see her dead than under his wicked influence; so I shall put her where he cannot find her."

"Once, father, I thought to send her to you, but the remembrance of your words: 'May you be hanged, and your children,' was ringing in my ears, and I said 'he shall not have a chance to wreak his vengeance on my child. Strangers will be kinder far than my own flesh and blood,' so I have resolved to send her to Mr. Wilton. 'Tis a queer place, but I can think of nothing better. He is alone in his great house, and who knows but he may adopt her as his own?"

"I have called her Mildred too, praying earnestly that she may look like Mildred of the starry eyes and nut-brown hair, for that would soften the old man's heart towards her. I have written to him an anonymous letter asking him to take her, and when I am dead, faithful Esther Bennett, who is nursing me, will take it and my baby to where her sister lives. There she will post the letter, and whether Mr. Wilton answers it or not, she will in a short time secretly convey Milly to his door, watching until some one takes her in."

"Then she will look after my child, and if in coming years, circumstances arise which seem to make it necessary for Mildred to know her parentage she will seek her out, tell her who she is and carry you this letter. You may think me crazy to adopt this plan, and so, perhaps, I am. But my husband, who is her lawful protector, shall not have her, and as I do not care to burden you with her, I shall send her to Beechwood."

"My strength is failing me, father, and in a day or so I shall be dead. I wish I could see you all once more, particularly Lawrence, my darling little brother Lawrence. Baby looks something like him, I think, and should she ever come to you, bid him love his little niece for his dead sister Helen's sake."

Mildred could not read another line—there was a sound like the fall of many waters in her ears—the blood seemed curdling in her veins, and her very finger-tips tingled with one horrid, maddening thought.

"Lawrence—Lawrence—little niece," she moaned, and with eyes black as midnight, and face of a marble hue, she turned to the superscription, which she had not observed before, reading, as she expected:

"ROBERT THORNTON, Esq."

"Oh, Heaven!" she cried, rocking to and fro. "Isn't it a dream? Isn't there some mistake? Tell me, dear, good woman, tell me, is it true?" and in her unutterable agony she knelt abjectly before the old woman, who answered back:

"Poor, poor Milly. It is true—all true, or I had

not come here to save you from a marriage with your mother's brother—your own uncle, girl."

"Stop!" and Mildred screamed with anguish, "I will not know that name. Oh, Lawrence, Lawrence, you are surely lost to me for ever and ever!"

There was a rustling movement, and then Mildred lay with her face upon the threshold of the door.

"Make haste, Clubs, for Heaven's sake," Mr. Wilton cried, as he went wheezing to the spot which Oliver had reached long before him.

From his position beneath the window Oliver had heard the entire conversation, but not knowing the contents of the letter, he was at a loss to comprehend how Lawrence Thornton could be Mildred's uncle. Something, however, had affected her terribly, he knew, for there was no mistaking the look of hopeless suffering stamped upon the rigid face he lifted gently up and rested on his bosom.

"What is it, Clubs? What's the row? Let me take her," and the old man relieved Oliver of the fainting girl, whom he held carefully in his arms, talking to her the while in his own peculiar way. "There, there, dear, what is it? Come to a little, can't you? Open your eyes, won't you? and don't look so much as though you were dead." Then feeling for her pulse, he screamed: "She is dead, Clubs! She is dead! and you, old long-toothed madam," shaking his fist at Esther Bennett. "You killed her with some wicked invention, and I'll see you get your deserts. Do you hear?"

Having thus relieved his mind, the excited old man carried Mildred into the open air, which roused her for a moment, but when she saw Esther Bennett she sank back again into the same death-like swoon, moaning faintly:

"Oh, Lawrence, Lawrence—lost for ever!"

"No he ain't—no he ain't," said Mr. Wilton, but his words fell on deaf ears, and, turning to Oliver, who had been hastily reading the letter, he asked what it was.

"Listen," and in a voice which trembled with strong emotion, Oliver read it through, while the old man's face dropped lower and lower until it rested upon the cold white forehead of her who lay so helpless in his arms.

"Bob Thornton's grandchild," he whispered.

"Bob Thornton's grandchild! Must I then lose my little Milly?" and great tears, such as Mr. Wilton only could shed, fell like rain on Mildred's face.

"There may be some mistake," suggested Oliver, and catching at once the idea, the old man swore roundly that there was a mistake.

"Needn't tell him. He believed 'twas some falsehood got up by somebody for something," and turning to the woman, he demanded of her savagely to confess the fraud.

But Esther Bennett answered back:

"It is all true, sir, true! I am sorry now that I kept it so long, for I never wanted to harm Miss Helen's child. Sure she has a bonny face, but she'll die, sir, lying so long in that faint."

This turned the channel of the old man's thoughts, and, remembering that not far away there was a little stream, he arose and walked swiftly on, bidding Esther follow, as he wished to question her farther on the subject. To this she did not seem at all averse, but went on with him willingly, answering readily all the questions which Oliver put to her, and appearing through the whole to be sincere in what she said.

The cold water which they sprinkled copiously on Mildred's face and neck restored her for a moment, but with a shudder she lay back in the arms of Mr. Wilton, who, declaring her as light as a feather, hobbled on, giving her occasionally a loving hug, and whispering as he did so:

"Hanged if they make me believe it. Bob ain't got her after I've made my will and all that."

By the drawing-room window Geraldine was sitting, and when, by the moonlight she saw the strange procession moving up the Cold Spring path, she went out to meet them, asking anxiously what had happened.

"Clubs can tell you," returned the old man, hurrying on with Mildred, while Oliver explained to Geraldine what he knew, and then referred her to Esther Bennett for any further information.

"Is it possible!" exclaimed Geraldine, while in her snaky eyes there was a glitter of delight, as she fell back with Esther, and began a most earnest conversation.

Up to her room Mr. Wilton carried Mildred, laying her upon the bed as gently as if she had been an infant, and then bending over her until she came fully back to consciousness and asked him where she was.

"Oh, I remember now!" she said. "A horrid thing came to me, and Lawrence is lost for ever."

"No, he ain't; it's all untrue!" said Mr. Wilton, and instantly on Mildred's face there broke a smile of such joy that Oliver cried out:

"It's cruel to deceive her so, Mr. Wilton, until we know for certain that the woman's story is false."

Like a hunted deer Mildred's eyes turned from one to the other, reading everywhere a confirmation of her fears, and, with a low, piercing cry, she moaned:

"It's true, it's true! he is lost for ever! Oh Oliver! can't you comfort me a little? You never failed me before; don't leave me now, when I need it the most!" and she wound her arms convulsively around his neck.

Oliver had his suspicions, and as he could give no reason for them he would not rouse hopes which might never be realized, and he only answered through his tears:

"I would like to comfort you, Milly, if I could; but I can't—I can't!"

"Mildred!"

It was Geraldine who spoke, and Mildred involuntarily shuddered as she heard the voice.

Uncle Robert once saw the woman who took care of Cousin Helen, and talked with her of his daughter and the baby, both of whom she declared to be dead. Had we not better send for him at once, and see if he remembers this creature?" nodding towards Esther Bennett, who had also entered the room. "He surely cannot mistake her if he ever saw her once."

Oliver looked to see the woman make some objection, but, to his surprise, she said, eagerly:

"Yes, send for him. He will remember me, for he came to London just three days after I left the baby at this door. He is a tall man, slightly bald, with black eyes, and coarse black hair, then beginning to be gray."

Mildred groaned, as did Oliver, for the description was accurate, while even the old man brought his fist down upon the table, saying:

"Bob to a dot! but hanged if I believe it! We'll telegraph in the morning."

The result of the telegram was that a late hour the next night Mr. Thornton rang the bell at Beechwood, asking anxiously why he had been sent for in such haste.

"Because," answered the old man, who met him first, "maybe you've a grandchild upstairs, and maybe you haven't!"

"A grandchild!" gasped Mr. Thornton, all manner of strange fancies flitting through his brain. "What can you mean?"

By this time Geraldine appeared, and hastily explaining to him what had occurred, she asked "if he could identify the woman who took care of Helen in London?"

"Yes, tell her from a thousand, but not now, not now," and motioning her away, Mr. Thornton covered his face with his hand, and whispered faintly, "My grandchild! My Mildred! That beautiful creature Helen's child!" and with all his softer feelings awakened, the heart of the cold, stern man yearned towards the young girl he had once affected to despise. "Poor boy," he said, as he thought of Lawrence, "twill be terrible to him, for his whole soul was bound up in her. Where is this woman? There may be some mistake. I trust there is, for the young people's sake," and the generous feeling thus displayed swept away at once all animosity from Mr. Wilton's heart.

"Describe her first as nearly as you can," said Geraldine, and after thinking a moment Mr. Thornton replied:

"Tall, grizzly; badly marked with small-pox, and had then one or more long teeth in front, which gave her a somewhat repulsive appearance."

"The same, the same!" dropped from Oliver's lips, while the old man, too, responded:

"It's all very queer, but hang me if I believe it!"

At Mr. Thornton's request, Esther Bennett came in, and the moment his eyes fell upon her he said:

"'Tis the woman I saw eighteen years ago; I cannot be mistaken in then."

"Question her," whispered Geraldine, who seemed quite excited in the matter.

And Mr. Thornton did question her, but if she were deceiving them, she had learned her lesson well, for no amount of cross-questioning could induce her to commit herself.

Indeed, she seemed, in spite of her looks, to be a sensible, straightforward woman, who was doing what she felt her duty.

"She had never lost sight of Mildred," she said, "and knowing that Mr. Wilton had adopted her, she had concluded not to divulge the secret until she heard that she was to marry Lawrence. But have you read the letter?" she asked. "That will prove that I am not telling an untruth."

"Surely," chimed in Geraldine, "I had forgotten that."

And she handed to Mr. Thornton his daughter's letter, which he read through, saying, when he had finished:

"It is Helen's handwriting and it must be true."

Then passing it to the old man he asked if it resembled the letter he received from the strange woman.

"Good gracious! how do I know?" returned the old man. "I tore that into giblets. I can't remember eighteen years, besides that, I'm bound not to believe it, hanged if I do. I've made up my mind latterly that Gipsy belonged to Dick, and I'll be hanged if I don't stick to that through thick and thin."

But whatever the old man might wish to believe, he was obliged to confess that the evidence was against him, and when, at an early hour the next morning the four assembled again for consultation, he said to Mr. Thornton:

"You want to see your grand-daughter, I suppose?"

"I'd like to, yes," was the reply, to which Mr. Wilton responded:

"Well, come along, though hang me if I believe it."

From Geraldine Mildred had learned what Mr. Thornton said, and that he would probably wish to see her in the morning. This swept away the last lingering hope, and with a kind of nervous terror she awaited his visit, trembling when she heard him in the hall, and looking fearfully round for some means of escape.

"Here, Milly," said the old man, bustling up to her and forcing a levity he did not feel, "here's your grandfather come to see you."

"No, no, no," sobbed Mildred, creeping closer to Mr. Wilton, and hiding her white face on his bosom.

"There, Robert," said the old man, smoothing her disordered hair and dropping a tear upon it. "You see she don't take kindly to her new grandfather. Better give it up, for I tell you, it's a falsehood."

"Mildred," said Mr. Thornton, seating himself upon the side of the bed, and taking one of the little feverish hands in his, "there can be no doubt that what we have heard is true, and, if so, you are my child, and as such very dear to me. You are young, yet, darling, and though your disappointment, as far as Lawrence is concerned, is terrible, you will overcome it in time. The knowing he is your uncle will help you so to do, and you will be happy with us yet. Don't you think so, dear?"

"Robert, you've made a splendid speech," returned Mr. Wilton, when he had finished. "Couldn't have done better myself, but it fell on stony ground, for look," and lifting up the beautiful head he showed him that Mildred had fainted.

"Poor girl, poor girl!" whispered Mr. Thornton; and the tears of both of those hard old men dropped on Mildred's face as they bent anxiously over her.

It was, indeed, a dreadful blow to Mildred, for turn which way she would there shone no ray of hope. Even Oliver deserted her as far as comfort was concerned, for he had none to offer.

A day or so brought Lillian to Beechwood—all love, all sweetness, all sympathy for Mildred, whom she counsined twenty times an hour, and who shrank from her caresses just as she did from both Geraldine and Mrs. Thornton.

"Oh, if I could go away from here for a time," she thought, "I might get over it, perhaps; but it will kill me to see Lawrence when he comes. I can't, I can't; oh, isn't there somewhere to go?"

Then suddenly remembering that not long before she had received an invitation to visit a favourite teacher, who was now married and lived in Hampshire, she resolved to accept it, and go for a few weeks, until Lawrence returned, and had learned the whole.

"I shall feel better there," she said to the old man and Oliver, to whom she communicated her plan. "Mrs. Miller will be kind to me, and when it's all over here, and they are gone, you must write, and I'll come back to stay with you for ever, for I won't live with Mr. Thornton, were he one hundred times my grandfather?"

This last pleased the old man so much that he consented at once for Mildred to go, saying it possibly would do her good. Then, repeating to himself the name of the place where Mrs. Miller lived, he continued:

"What do I know of it? Oh, I remember, Hetty Kirby is buried there. Hetty Kirby; Hetty Kirby." He looked as if there was something more he would say of Hetty Kirby, but he merely added: "Maybe I'll come for my myself. I'd go with you if it wasn't for my confounded toe."

And he glanced at his swollen foot, which had been badly hurt on the night of his visit to the cottage, and was now so sore that in walking he was obliged to use a crutch.

"I'd rather go alone," said Mildred.

And after a little further conversation it was arranged that in two days' time she should set off, first apprising Mrs. Miller by letter of all that had

occurred, and asking her to say nothing of the matter, but speak of her as Miss Hawley, that being the name to which she supposed herself entitled.

This being satisfactorily settled, Mr. Thornton and Geraldine were both informed of Mildred's intentions.

"A good idea," said Geraldine. "Change of place will do her good, but I think Lily and I had better remain here until Lawrence arrives. A letter will not find him now, and as he intends stopping at Beechwood on his return, he will know nothing of it until he reaches here."

Mr. Wilton would rather have been left alone, but he was polite enough not to say so, though he did suggest that Esther Bennett, at least, should leave, a hint upon which she acted at once, going back to London that very day.

Mildred would rather that Geraldine and Lillian too should have gone, but as this could not be she stipulated in their presence that Oliver and no other should break the news to Lawrence. "He would do it so gently," she said, and she bade him say to Lawrence that "though she never could forget him, she did not wish to see him. She could not bear it, and he must not come after her."

Oliver promised compliance with her request, and the next morning she left Beechwood, accompanied by Mr. Thornton, who insisted upon going with her as far as the station, where she must leave the rail and take the stage for a distance of ten miles.

Here he bade her good-bye, with many assurances of affectionate good will, to none of which Mildred listened. Her heart was too full of grief to respond at once to this new claimant for her love, and she was glad when he was gone and she alone with her sorrow.

(To be continued.)

THE POTATO.

It seems that Thomas Hariot, the English mathematician, was one of the adventurers who accompanied Sir Walter Raleigh to America. In giving an account of the indigenous roots he refers to a plant called *opawak*. "The roots of this plant," says he, "are round, some as large as a walnut, others much larger; they grow in damp soils, many hanging together, as if fixed on ropes. They are good food, either boiled or roasted."

The passages in the Elizabethan dramatists in which mention is made of the potato refer to the sweet potato (*Batatas edulis*). This variety was cultivated in Spain and Portugal, and exported thence to other countries. The potatoes furnished to the table of the Queen of James I. bore the high price of two shillings a pound.

A work written as late as 1708 speaks of the vegetable thus slightly: "The root is very near the nature of a Jerusalem artichoke, although not so good and wholesome; but it may prove good for swine." And another authority, in 1719, refers to it as "of less note than horse-radish, radish, ascorbazon, beets and skirret." But it came to be so highly appreciated about 1796 that in the county of Essex alone no fewer than seventeen hundred acres were planted with it. In its efforts to enter Scotland, the potato encountered the same hostile resistance as did the spinning-wheel and the corn farmers. "Potatoes," said the pious natives, "are not mentioned in the Bible."

THE British Embassy, by a long way the handsomest and costliest residence in Washington, has been finished, and is ready for the occupancy of Sir Edward Thornton. Its cost has been about \$30,000, and the furnishing will cost half that sum. It has seventy rooms, and covers about 10,000 square feet of ground. It is of pressed brick, laid in black mortar, and is trimmed with light gray sandstone.

MONUMENT TO THE LATE DUKE OF KENT.—Her Majesty intends erecting a splendid monument in memory of his late Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, in St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle. The site selected by the Queen is the south-western corner of the nave, beneath the south aisle, and including what was formerly known as Beaufort Chapel. The Beaufort tomb has been removed, and the walls are being restored. Some little time previous to the visit of the Belgian volunteers to Windsor Castle Her Majesty had erected in St. George's Chapel a white marble memorial—a bas-relief—of his late Majesty Leopold, King of the Belgians. The sculpture was executed by Miss Durant, who contributed the bas-reliefs of the busts of the Princes and Princesses of the Royal Family which as medallions adorn the walls of the Albert Memorial Chapel, and it was affixed to the wall at the end of the south aisle close to the Beaufort Chapel. Within the last few weeks the Leopold memorial has been removed to Claremont Church (Essex), Claremont House

having been the residence of Princess Charlotte, the late King's consort—the site which it occupied in St. George's Chapel being required for the Duke of Kent's monument. This is now in hand, and when finished will prove one of the chief objects of interest in the Royal Chapel.

THE SWEET SISTERS OF INCHVARRA; OR, THE VAMPIRE OF THE GUILLAMORES.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Mrs. CARROL re-entered the sick room: so softly that the sick man did not hear her, and sitting behind the bed curtains at the foot of his bed put her hand on her heart to still its throbbing. Nobody would have thought her imperterbably now who saw her fiercely flushed and earnest face.

Suddenly Guillamore sprang up in bed, stretched forth his pale hand, and swept aside the curtain.

"Ho!" cried he, harshly, "a spy, are you? Go, I have no faith in one of you! You are all in league against me! Go, I say!"

Mrs. Carrol crept from the room.

Then Guillamore slowly rose and locked the door and began to dress.

The glitter of intense excitement was in his eye—he continually bit his lip in a kind of sullen fury.

He was often forced to rest, the large sweat-drops of weakness standing on his forehead, but at last he accomplished the feat.

He marched into the parlour, and the nurse screamed at the sight of him.

"Call me a hansom," ordered he, throwing himself upon the sofa.

She silently poured out a glass of wine and put it beside him, then flew for the vehicle.

In her absence the servant entered with a bottle of medicine which the Count de St. Cyr had promised to send.

Kenselm opened the package and looked at it, with what feelings may be imagined. This tiny phial might contain his death-warrant, on the other hand it might be the intended means of saving his life.

He put it on the table close behind him.

When Mrs. Carrol returned she grew pale as her eye fell on the phial of medicine, and Guillamore marked it.

When next he looked for the phial it was gone. He thought then he knew what the game was, and his very hair rose. He could scarcely endure the touch of her hands as she helped him on with his overcoat and gloves. He made an effort, however, and spoke to her.

"I shall have no farther need of your services after this," said he. "Ask my valet for your wages."

Mrs. Carrol murmured a shocked exclamation and stared at him with her round brown eyes.

"Do you hear?" reiterated Kenselm, while a dangerous purple glow mounted into his temples.

"Yes, sir," answered the nurse, in her usual quiet manner.

"I am not going to return to this place for some days," resumed the sick man, looking about him with a wandering eye, "so you see I have no need of a nurse."

"Oh, sir!" exclaimed Mrs. Carrol, earnestly, "are you going abroad? For your own sake consider, Mr. Guillamore! You're not fit to travel—indeed you're not!"

"Oh! you would like to keep near me, wouldn't you?" sneered Kenselm.

"That I would!" responded the nurse, with real distress in her voice. "If you only knew what you've escaped—"

"Thank you," said the patient, with a withering smile. "Where is that bottle of the 'Elixir of Life,' which you and your coadjutor arranged to give me?"

"The—the phial?" stammered Mrs. Carrol, now thoroughly disconcerted; "sure, sir, and I—I—"

"No matter! Ha, ha, ha! You would rather not have its contents examined, eh? My admiring farewell to De St. Cyr and yourself, madam!"

He staggered down the stairs with delirious laughter, followed at a respectful distance by the nurse. She expected to see him fall in a fit each moment.

His valet, who, sooth to say, was having an exceedingly easy time of it during his illness, was unfortunately at his own particular club house, dining, so Kenselm had no attendant, and indeed he forgot the deficiency.

Assisted by the driver he got into the hansom, ordered him to drive to the Marquis of Winstanley's, Denbigh Terrace, and sank back with closed eyes.

The nurse went back to his apartments wringing her hands.

The hansom drove rapidly through the streets, now becoming indistinct in the early London twilight, and soon stopped before the elegant mansion where Lord John kept bachelor abode.

The marquis had started for the Continent two hours before.

Kenselm put his hand to his forehead, and for five minutes the hansom-driver thought his fare was going off in a fit, but he rallied and said:

"Go back to the hotel and ask Mr. Musgrave, the hotel-master, to keep Mrs. Carrol until we can get a warrant."

Cabby looked dubiously at the gentleman, but turned his way at the trot, and away they elated.

When they had performed about half the distance the check-string was pulled and Kenselm gave a new command.

"Stop at the hotel and ask Mr. Musgrave if Mr. Guillamore's nurse has left the hotel yet. Nothing else."

Cabby looked a world of wisdom and drove on.

When the hotel was reached he hastened in, leaving his fare seemingly in a lethargy in one corner of the carriage.

In a few minutes he returned, saying:

"The nurse aren't gone, sir; she's b'n in Mr. Guillamore's apartments, sir."

"That is well. Drive to a place where you can observe everyone that leaves the door, and when she comes out follow her. A slender, medium-sized woman, black dress, white cap under black silk bonnet, gray plaid."

"Yes, sir; the person what came down to the door with you. All right."

He drove on a few paces, crossed the wide street and took up a position which commanded a distinct view of the pavement in front of the hotel.

The street lamps were now lit; the shadows were dark as night could make them, while the gas glare flooded the broad steps leading down from the hotel.

Half an hour passed by in absolute silence, during which the driver leaned against a lamp-post smoking, and keeping one eye on the hotel, the other on his strange fare.

At the end of that time Mrs. Carrol came out and hurried in the opposite direction.

The cabman vaulted on to his box, and cleverly keeping her in view through all her manifold windings, followed her at a walk until she entered a handsome house near Hyde Park.

"This, then, is the house of her employer," muttered Guillamore; "the Vampire—the second Brinvilliers!"

He laughed grimly.

Thrusting a handful of sovereigns into the astonished driver's hand, he got out and staggered across the street to the door of the house like a somnambulist.

Toiling up the shallow steps, he reached a porch through the stained glass inner door of which he could discern the black dress of the nurse.

In a whirl of excitement, he flung open the door (it was only on the latch), and stood in a brilliantly lit hall, glaring before him somewhat like Banquo's ghost.

A lustreous vision greeted him; a lady clad in long, gleaming satin robes, and fluttering laces like sea-fans, had her bejewelled arms tightly clasped round the nurse, Mrs. Carrol, and her face on her shoulder.

They both looked round, and each uttered a stifled scream. The lady threw up her arms and retreated into a chamber just behind her.

CHAPTER XXX.

GUILLAMORE rushed after her and grasped her by the flowing robes.

She recovered herself; she drew herself to her full height; she turned her face to him and met his astounded gaze with dignity.

"Signorina Corilla!" faltered he.

For weeks she had never entered his thoughts, unless with a faint regret attached to memory that he should have treated her so badly.

He would rather have encountered any other woman in London than the famous prima donna. Yet he had blundered into her very drawing-room.

And the cause? What was Mrs. Carrol doing here?

Could this noble-faced woman whom he had always intuitively felt to be frost pure, and far above him in every moral attribute, could she also be in league with his enemies?

He dropped upon a silken couch, his mind in a chaos. This last suspicion left him bankrupt in speech.

"Mr. Gilmore, this is an unexpected, but none the less welcome visit," said the singer, with a very tremulous smile, and she seated herself opposite him.

"I was just about to attend Marlborough House—professionally, you know—but fortunately I can delay

for half an hour. You look ill, indeed, I have heard you were very ill; pray let us dismiss ceremony, and accept a glass of wine."

She flew to the bell and rang it excitedly. Indeed her whole manner, despite the very fine command which she had over herself, betokened considerable agitation; her colour came and went, her hands trembled, and each time she ventured to glance at the ghastly and wasted face of the once handsome man she seemed on the point of bursting into tears.

In dumbfounded silence Kenelm regarded her, while a footman brought in some richly out decorated and glasses of wine on a silver tray, and allowed her to pour him out one, with a hand that shook, and offer it.

"Signorina," exclaimed he, with a start, "before I accept your kindness I must explain what brought me here. I was following a woman that I want to arrest."

"To arrest?" echoed Signorina Corilla, standing aghast.

"Yes, she is called Carrol—she came as nurse while I was ill, and I suspect her of tampering with my medicine."

"Drink this—you are very weak, dear Mr. Gilmore," interrupted the lady, in the tone one uses to a child.

Her lips were quivering with a half-smile.

Involuntarily Kenelm swallowed the wine, and even consented to take a second glass; and the stimulant kept him from an inglorious collapse.

"Now," said she, "that a little colour has returned to those pale lips of yours we shall come to some understanding about this Mrs. Carrol. Do not feel alarmed about her in the meantime; she is certain not to leave the house without telling me. I am about to set you right upon some very important points, and if you will permit me I will summon a friend of mine who can, if necessary, continue the explanation after I have gone to keep my engagement. Shall I send for her?"

"Certainly, madam," returned Kenelm.

It was impossible for him not to feel calmed and reassured by her perfectly frank address.

The signorina rang for her servant, and on his appearance, said:

"Ask Miss Kathleen to join us; I wish to present a gentleman to her."

"Mrs. Carrol tells me you have been very ill indeed," she remarked, when the man had vanished. "I had no idea that you were able to leave your bed."

"I have been ill—but enough of that, signorina; you are only laughing at my gaunt face when you make my health the subject of—"

"Heaven forbid, sir!"

"Why should you express a kindly interest in such a worthless dog as I? You owe me nothing but a grudge for my very shabby treatment of you!"

The prima donna's proud eye filled with tears, but she answered with dignity:

"I have never felt a grudge towards you, sir. Why should I? But instead I have noted your recent career with the deepest anxiety."

"Ay, you may well say that! For Heaven's sake, madam, tell me who and what this Mrs. Carrol is!"

"You shall hear presently. Ah! this is my friend."

While she spoke a young girl of modest and charming appearance entered, and bowed profoundly, while the lady pronounced her name, her face covered with blushes.

"Miss Guillamore, a young Irishwoman, Mr. Gilmore, who has more knowledge of a certain mystery which overhangs your life than you have."

Kenelm was mystified. He gazed at the young girl with puzzled attention. Her name was his own, her features were familiar, after the mocking resemblances of a dream-face. Indeed he felt as if it were all a dream.

The two ladies sat on the same couch together. Signorina Corilla began to speak, and as she proceeded she seemed to require the constant encouragement of her companion to aid her.

A strong timidity hung over her; deep blushes sometimes darted over her face; her brown eyes betrayed the most vivid emotions when she raised them, which she seldom did. Had it not been for the amazing nature of her communications, Kenelm would have become absorbed in watching the charming speaker.

Said the prima donna:

"You read the account of Christabel Snowe the adventures, in the paper of to-day, did you not?"

With a dark frown Kenelm bowed.

"Do you believe it?"

He bowed again.

"Are you anxious to prove it?"

The same answer.

"I have in my possession a number of Confiden-

tal journals of almost every country and various dates ranging over the last five years, which contain links in the chain of that history which you read to-day. I have myself seen the woman who called herself Christabel Snowe, at intervals during her eventful life. You must remember the many opportunities afforded me in the pursuit of my profession. I saw her first as a natural as Gluck Zimmermann while I was studying music with my German master in Bavaria. I sketched her head, little dreaming that I should ever see the original again. I saw her next, to my amazement, at Baden-Baden playing the wealthy favourite of an English noble. Captain Blase was also an object of notoriety because of his daring play at the Kurusel. I met the woman next at Venice where I was singing; she was the object of a certain Count Mahragall's ceaseless attentions, and she was then known as a young English peeress, Lady Tracy by name. I saw her once more at Frankfurt. She was a mighty incognito there, keeping up a magnificent style, and her name was Christabel Snowe. She made a moonlight flitting while I was there, and while her admirers whispered that a royal princess had passed from their midst a horde of creditors mourned her loss as a swindler. At last I saw her in London. Still she bore the name of Christabel Snowe—still she moved in royal magnificence, only this time in company with another lady called Mrs. St. Columb!"

"Stop!" exclaimed Kenelm, lifting up his hand. His face was pale, an expression of horror was filling his eyes. "You make a mistake in supposing that the Christabel Snowe who was known in England was the adventures," said he, striving to keep his composure. "Mrs. St. Columb was Christabel Snowe in reality—and the young lady who accompanied her was called Vera Guillamore, but renamed Christabel Snowe by the adventures herself. Merciful Heaven! Vera Guillamore is my sister! Is it possible that there is an intention of making her the scapegoat?"

He stopped in consternation too deep for words; as for the ladies a like emotion kept them dumb; Kathleen drew nearer him in surprise to hear her own name on his lips.

At length the singer resumed:

"This is indeed horrible! there is no doubt that the innocent lady is to be forced to bear the punishment of the guilty one, just as it was managed in Malta. I had no suspicion that it was your sister who was her companion, else I should have been careful to establish the identity of each. To proceed with my personal knowledge of her, Mr. Gilmore, I soon saw her a nightly visitor at the opera, yourself a regular occupant of her box and the Marquis of Winstanley as regular. I marked the terrible change in your looks, the gradual and sure undermining of your health, and the remembrance of her Borgia reputation haunted me. Pardon me, but I suspected from the first that you were a determined lover whom she had willed to remove by poison so as to win the marquis the more safely. It was this fear which urged me to meddle with your affairs as I have done, and to publish that exposé of the adventures in the newspapers."

The signorina paused; her voice had sunk so low at the last words that Kenelm could scarcely hear it. He gazed at her breathless.

"You wrote it, signorina!" ejaculated he; "and for my sake!"

"I must confess that I grudged such a one as you to become her prey," said the singer, rather tremulously, "and so when I heard of your strange and unnatural illness, and also that a French doctor who was said to be a pet of Christabel Snowe's was attending you my fears reached their height. I confided them to a dear young friend of mine, and she, brave girl, volunteered to disguise herself as a sick-nurse, and so, finding her way to your bedside, to guard you from treachery."

Kenelm listened in astonishment. It was impossible to disbelieve a word these chaste lips uttered, though not one luring device was used to beguile his credulity.

"The so-called Mrs. Carrol," continued Signorina Corilla, clasping Kathleen's hand in her own, "was just in time to rouse you from what would have been a death-sleep. Providentially she had taken with her the antidote to the poison you were sinking under, and during the twelve hours which passed before your physician made his appearance she managed to get you past the crisis safely. Since then she has brought home every suspicious-looking bottle of drugs which the Count de St. Cyr prescribed, and I have had them all analyzed by a celebrated chemist. Had you taken one half, you would have gone ere this. To-night she brought me a very small phial which from its peculiar odour, I fear, contained enough arsenic to have performed the coup de grace. The miscreant must have been in desperation else he would never have ventured so far; but, thank Heaven, my dear friend, you are safe, and here it is!"

The signorina held up the very phial Kenelm had had in his hand that afternoon, while with heavy tears in her eyes and cheeks pale with emotion she strove to subdue any unwonted feeling by smiling triumphantly.

In spite of Guillamore's natural horror at the satanic plot which had been laid for his life, he was so thrilled by this generous woman's interest in his behalf, and by her bravery, as also by that of the young girl at her side, whom he now felt sure was Mrs. Carrol, that, forgetting how weak he was, he sprang up, and took a soft hand of each.

"What have I done," he cried, in heartfelt tones, "that you should have befriended me thus? I have only earned your contempt, signorina," he gave her an eloquent glance; "and as for you, my sweet young lady, did I not fault you every hour of the day by my suspicions?"

"Spare us these thanks," exclaimed Signorina Corilla, blushing deeply, and withdrawing her hand. "Indeed, sir, I had determined that you should never suspect my share in your affairs. Had you not so cunningly followed Kathleen, you would never have known anything about it."

"I do not deserve this pleasure it is true," faltered Kenelm, who was becoming very pale. Suddenly he reeled and sank to the floor. The prima donna, with a half shriek, flung her slender arm about him, and so broke the fall, after which she knelt beside him, and lifting his head gazed wildly at him.

Kathleen's brief duties as nurse stood in good stead now. She unlocked his necktie and saying, quietly: "Lay his head upon the floor, Muriel dear; it's only a swoon," darted out for a restorative.

The prima donna glanced quickly round the spacious and graceful saloon, there was no one in sight; she looked wildly, sorrowfully upon the death-pale yet heroic face on her bosom and her beautiful lips pressed his for one passionate moment; then she softly laid him down, only that her neck and brow were scarlet and her heart throbbing loudly, though he was so chill and unconscious that the blast of a trumpet might scarce quiver an eyelid.

Presently Kathleen returned with a couple of servants and a bottle of sal volatile.

They carried the gentleman into a state bedroom near by and placed him on a sofa, and while Kitty flew round him, busy and hopeful, the prima donna crouched close by his head as pale as a ghost.

The carriage came for Signorina Corilla to take her to the palace, and Jeffrey stood in the doorway, with her striped Chinchilla cloak in her hands.

"I cannot go to-night," said the great singer, with a half-sob.

Jeffrey was aghast. He knew the impossibility of public characters indulging themselves with private emotions.

"Madam, royalty will never forgive the disappointment," he said.

"I do not care!" cried the prima donna, who was only a woman just now. "What is all the world to me? What is ruin itself when his life is at stake?"

At this a change came over the face of Guillamore; his lips slightly quivered, his cheeks flushed, his large, dark eyes flew open and gave her a look.

She flew from the room, forehead, neck, arms, all bathed in fierce blushes.

She did not object any longer to do her duty. She went to Marlborough House and sang—the papers said like Saint Cecilia.

A bouquet was handed to her before she left the royal rooms, and in its heart was a splendid eastern diamond. The signorina shook all hearts with the fire of her genius that night. And why?

She had sipped of the divine elixir, whose name is Love.

CHAPTER XXXI.

KENELM GUILLAMORE'S evening adventures had been too much for him.

To Kitty's secret delight he was forced to accept the signorina's hospitality, and be put to bed for a fortnight.

A plain family physician, without any grand title, was called in to attend to him, and between his skillful treatment and Kitty's—the little mix resumed her wig, close cap, bombazine gown, and black apron for the purpose—he did really begin to turn the corner of his baleful illness at last.

Signorina Corilla, though only too thankful that her house was the asylum to which he had been consigned by an unusually good-natured fortune, knew too well the censorious tongue of Madame Grundy to trust itself to its scathing lash, so she openly took rooms at a fashionable hotel, and gave out that she feared the illness of her gentleman friend to be infectious.

This served a double purpose. It shielded him from unpleasant comment, and insured for the invalid



[PITT AKIN TO LOVE.]

the most peaceful retirement from his club acquaintances and unprofitable friends.

Meanwhile affairs had assumed a most alarming aspect.

Winstanley had rushed off in the first heat of his despair at reading the exposé of Christabel Snowe, to find Vara Guilmore too likely, and denounce her as the adventuress!

The Count de St. Cyr was nowhere to be found; without doubt he had fled to apprise his employer of her danger.

Vara, the innocent and loyal minded girl, where was she?

Tossing on his bed, Kenelm revolved his position with anything but calmness.

The idolatry with which he had regarded the infamous Madame Blaze had now given place to a furious abhorrence. Her wiles, her perfidies, her blasphemies, her perjuries, pretensions, and her unparalleled hypocrisy surged over him like mountain waves, and washed the last ray of romance concerning her from memory.

And Vara was committed to the mercy of this Circe; as his life had been slowly undermined, so was hers; even now she might be no more.

The young man's anxiety became piteous to witnesses, and it was only at Kathleen's earnest entreaties that he strove to be patient in his inaction and to give himself a chance for recovery.

But he would most likely have tried another hansom excursion in some moment of wild excitement had not the signorina discovered all at once that she cared more for his happiness than for the censorious tongues of a thousand Grudies.

She came to him pale with tears in her eyes, and cried:

"Dear Mr. Gilmore, why are you so troubled while I am here? You know that I will do anything for you that you direct. While you lie here helpless make me your hand!"

This generous outburst penetrated to the core of Guilmore's unhappy heart. He gazed upon her countenance, so noble, so sincere, so natural with absolute reverence.

"I do not deserve such kindness from you," he muttered, in a choked voice. "You are certainly heaping coals of fire on my head."

"Oh, be silent!" cried she, sharply. "Why will you speak of that? May I not choose to do a service to a human being in need of it, without reference to sex? Let me help you; I have the power and the means."

She sat down with a dignity that was admirable, but not calculated to lure her listener into profes-

sions of love. Kathleen hung over the back of her chair, with her pretty hands in a loose chain round the prima donna's white neck, and as the poor fellow's eyes wandered from one good little dimpled face to the other grave and noble one, and he remembered how much he owed to these two women already, and when he recalled the lovely but satanic siren by way of contrast, you will not wonder that he should have taken them into his inmost confidence then and there.

"Ten years ago," said Kenelm, dreamily, "I left my father's home in a rage. I may as well make a clean breast of all my follies to you; you can't think very much less of me than probably you do already. I left Inchvarra Castle because my father accused me of carrying off a girl from the village of Clonachen and hiding her from her family. The girl's name was Muriel Armar."

The signorina sat quite still, but there was a wild, trembling flush on her face and tears in her eyes. Kathleen gasped forth an exclamation, but as she did not explain it Kenelm proceeded.

"I did love the girl, far too well to have dragged her into ruin; but since she had run away with somebody else, as I suppose, I wasn't going to tell my father he was wrong, but I said I'd never enter Inchvarra Castle again while it was in the hands of the Guilmores—that meant for ever—and away I went to make my fortune or to die, I cared very little which."

"Well, somehow I progressed, though I was carrying the curse of the undutiful son on my head wherever I went. In California I became a shareholder in some of the richest mines, made fortunes half a dozen times and lost them again, took a fancy to the sea, bought a magnificent ship, took command of her, traded in every sea, wrecked her on the shores of Canton in the Bocca Tigris, but gained ten thousand pounds on the cargo of opium, got tired of the pig-tails by-and-by, levanted for St. Petersburg with a Russian nobleman, and was offered a situation of honour in the Imperial council."

"Two years ago I was in Malta, and there I first met the woman who seems to be the curse of our family. Of course she stole my heart and flung it away. (I've been unlucky in that particular all through.) You know why she vanished in a hurry—the disclosure of her adventures stunned me, for you see I had believed the creature an angel—and I returned to Russia without hearing the after-tale of somebody else having been made the scapegoat. I had then five thousand a year, of saved-up residues of some half a dozen fortunes, which I had bound up so that I could only get at the interest, and when I

was tired of my wild life I thought, like the prodigal son, I would go to my father. So last September I arrived in London, intending to proceed directly to Ireland. I had been in London but two days when I made the acquaintance of a gentleman whom I now believe to have been Captain Blaze, a large, dark, ferocious-looking fellow, flowing moustaches and beard, lurid eyes, foreign tout ensemble."

"The same!" ejaculated the signorina. "It was thus I saw him in Venice."

Kathleen listened with rapt attention; her bright eyes were distended and dark with awe.

"This fellow," continued Kenelm, "invited me to dine with him at his club; while there I was taken alarmingly ill—when I came back to consciousness the Count de St. Cyr was in attendance; I was removed to my hotel, and at my own solicitation De St. Cyr continued to attend me for what he called a paralytic attack induced by dissipation. This was the commencement of this illness."

"About four months afterwards I was in the opera one night hearing you sing, signorina, there my sister Vara recognized me, and sent for me to visit her box. She also appeared to be dying of a mysterious disease."

"She told me that father and mother were dead; that Aileen was lost, herself under the patronage of a stranger, and the Castle of Inchvarra no longer the home of the Guilmores."

"The words which I had flung at my father in bitterness had recoiled upon my own head; I had forsaken my helpless sisters, and our name was dragged into the dust; I should indeed never enter the Castle of Inchvarra again while it was in the hands of a Guilmore."

"Vara told me that the old steward of the castle, Denis Guilmore, had heard of some great French property which was going begging for Irish heirs, and he had gone to France, in September, to see if she, Vara and Aileen, might not belong to the Franco-Irish family, and so fall into the estates. During his absence Aileen was forcibly carried off and has never since been heard of. Denis was shot by some unknown murderer a few miles from the castle on the very night of his return, the castle was overrun by creditors, Vara was driven out and would have been homeless but that a lady called Mrs. St. Columb adopted her and carried her off to London under the name of Christabel Snowe, lest the mysterious enemies who had scattered and ruined the family should trace her. And from the time she fell into the hands of this good Samaritan my sister's health began to decline."

(To be continued.)



[THE ESCAPE.]

MARLIN MARDUKE.

CHAPTER V.

These two hated with a hate
Fond only on the stage.

Byron.

THE arrest of the landlord at once redoubled the confusion in the room, and it seemed for a moment as if his friends were about to spring upon the bold man who had arrested him, for a movement towards the commandant was instantly made, by which he was surrounded and cut off from his followers.

The voice of Geoffrey Marduke checked the movement, and all gave way before him as he pushed his way through the assemblage until he stood face to face with the commandant.

Marlin still retained his grasp upon the red and grizzly beard of the Bavarian with his left hand, while his pistol was thrust against the man's temples.

"If any man attempts a rescue," said the young commandant, in a firm, clear tone, that rang sharply throughout the room, "I will blow his brains out on the spot!"

As he spoke the short but powerful form and formidable face of Geoffrey Marduke confronted him, and a deep silence fell upon all.

It was well known by most of the spectators that a bitter enmity existed between Geoffrey Marduke and his son Marlin. It was known that they had not spoken to each other in friendly tone for years, and that Marlin had always carefully avoided every chance that might throw him into personal contact with Geoffrey.

When Marlin, in his early youth, while yet but a lad, had rebelled against the lawless commands and desires of his father, Geoffrey had cursed him, beaten him, and driven him from his roof, bidding him never show his face there again.

Years passed after that scene before Marlin Marduke met Geoffrey again, and before he returned to Anglesey. And when he did return, about a year prior to the opening of this tale, he came back as commandant of all the coastguard in that section of the kingdom.

On his return he had avoided the presence of his father, and in no less a degree that of his half-brother Herod.

But there was one, and but one in all Anglesey, for whom he had eagerly inquired on his return. She was but a child, as he was but a boy, when he hurried from Anglesey to seek a better fortune and more honourable name than he could hope ever to obtain in that disreputable town, yet Elena and Marlin had

plighted already their young hearts to be mutually faithful for ever, so that when he and she met, after years of separation—years during which neither had heard any tidings of the other, each sprang joyfully into the other's glad embrace.

Each was rejoiced to find the other so improved by the flight of time, and more devoted in love than ever. But of this we will speak more fully hereafter.

Marlin Marduke soon discovered, however, that during his absence the ever-increasing charms of Elena had greatly infatuated the mind of his half-brother, the fierce, headstrong and ferocious Herod, and that Kaspar Rheinhand, who extended over her the authority of a father, favoured with emphatic openness the suit of the young smuggler.

Herod and Marlin had never been friends, not even in their childhood; for totally different in habits, in tastes and in character, a bitter antipathy had sprung up between them, so that even when children they never played together nor sought each other's society.

This antipathy had remained deep-seated in the memory of each, so that they met after the lapse of years to find first that they were bitter enemies in their professions—Herod being a violator of the law and Marlin a guardian of its commands—Herod a smuggler, and Marlin a revenue-officer; and suddenly that they were rivals in love. Thus the old antipathy had flamed up into fierce and glowing hate.

With Herod this feeling was black, bitter and fiendish, bloodthirsty and unscrupulous. He hated with the deep, evil hate of a wicked and utterly debased nature. In his eyes it would be no crime to murder his brother if that brother stood between him and his desires.

With Marlin this feeling of hatred was firm and lasting; yet with no desire nor purpose to harm a hair of Herod's head so long as Herod should act fairly and honourably towards him and Elena.

There was a principle of haughty contempt for Herod and his lawless habits in the feeling of antipathy with which the commandant regarded him. He had never been able to look upon Herod as one in whose veins flowed kindred blood with his own, yet, as the reader has learned, "he could never forget that Herod was his brother."

Lofty in principle and honourable in all his aspirations Marlin Marduke could not stoop to regard Herod with any sentiments except those of dislike and contempt for his character and calling.

Towards Geoffrey Marduke Marlin entertained feelings very near akin to those with which he regarded Herod. He could not love nor respect him, nor could he recall the day when he had not shrunk with instinctive dislike and fear from the fierce and cruel-

minded man. It vexed his pride that fate had given him such a man for his father, and that honourable and honest men could say, "Marlin Marduke is the son of dark Geoffrey—the leader of all the smuggler gangs along the coast."

His father had beaten him mercilessly with a staff—beaten him simply and only because Marlin Marduke's conscience told him there was very little difference between robbing the revenue of the government and robbery upon the highway; and Marlin Marduke, though he was the son of Geoffrey and the brother of Herod, could be neither smuggler nor robber. Geoffrey had beaten him and cursed him, and driven him from his roof with terrible imprecations, bidding him go starve in his honesty, but never to return unless he returned to be as his brother Herod was, a valuable ally to him as a smuggler.

Marlin had returned to Anglesey, sent there by the Admiralty to check the immense depredations committed by Geoffrey and his well organized gangs; but he had received the emissaries sent by Geoffrey on his arrival with a stern and menacing brevity of dismissal which convinced old Marduke that Marlin was as honourable and honest as ever, and no friend of lawless men.

It may seem strange that a man so high and noble in principles, in all his actions, and even in his thoughts, should have been able to regard his father with the cold and haughty sternness which was used towards him by Marlin Marduke. But besides the reasons we have given there was one which had oppressed his mind and soul for years, a potent though vague suspicion, as powerful as a high sense of honour itself—a suspicion of which we are to speak hereafter, a suspicion which was a hope in the proud and ambitious heart of Marlin Marduke.

Since his return to Anglesey, Marlin had made himself peculiarly obnoxious to the greater portion of its citizens, including all the smugglers along that section of the coast by his prompt, able and daring discharge of duty.

When it had first become known about a year before the date of our story, that a young man, not twenty-five years of age, and this young man a son of Geoffrey Marduke, had been appointed to the arduous and perilous post of revenue commandant, there was no little rejoicing and laughter in Anglesey and upon the decks of every smuggler-craft along that coast.

Geoffrey Marduke alone had received the news with a scowl and the fierce glare of the eye, while he set his white and glistening teeth hard together, thinking as he clenched his fists and quivered with emotion:

"It is fate! I saw the man in the eyes of the boy as I flogged him years ago. He will be more to be feared than laughed at, if he hold the same opinions as those for which I struck him."

This secret opinion of the smuggler chief was soon proved true, for the oldest villain in all that section averred that never had there been upon that coast so dangerous a foe to smuggling as this young commandant, whose own father and half-brother were smuggler chiefs.

Wherever Marlin Marduke commanded or acted in person the most cunningly devised plans, the most formidable show of force and menace on the part of the smugglers and desperados of the coast, were crushed or beaten down with astonishing skill and celerity, so that within the brief period of a single year his name had become a terror to the most lawless and daring.

Many plots had been laid to effect his capture, that he might be imprisoned in some of the many secret caves and hiding-places of the gangs, or even that his life should be forfeited to their vengeance, but so wary had he been that every scheme was baffled, so that some of the more superstitious of those men whispered their belief that Marlin Marduke either had a spy among the smugglers, or had dealings with the Evil One.

Especially was the young commandant hated and feared by old Kaspar Rheinband, for twice within the year had smuggled goods been traced to the "Stuart Arms" and found therein; and nothing except the influence of Elena had saved the landlord from arrest.

As it was known that Marlin Marduke did not confine his operations against crime to the baffling and detection of smugglers alone, but sought out and arrested criminals of every kind, Kaspar Rheinband feared he might some day feel the presence of that remarkable power and energy which had so rapidly cut down the profits of landing, concealing and disposing of smuggled goods.

He had begun to tremble at the very sight of the tall form and the haughty, handsome face of the daring commandant, so much so that he persecuted Elena to force her to request Marlin Marduke to never put his foot into the "Stuart Arms."

Elena would willingly have endured the most cruel tortures rather than resign her lover, and therefore refused to hint to Marlin the cruelties put upon her daily by her tyrant.

Marlin learned the truth, however, as might readily be supposed so observant and penetrating a mind speedily would. He ceased to visit the inn as he had been in the habit of doing, and, though he and Elena often met in secret, his presence in the "Stuart Arms," on the evening of which we are speaking, was for the first time within several weeks.

Still he had a vigilant eye upon all that took place in the inn, and when the requirements of his duty bade him enter to effect an arrest, he had not hesitated to act, as he always acted, promptly and daringly.

His menace to slay Kaspar Rheinband rang out loud and clear as Geoffrey Marduke forced his way to his presence, and though he deplored the necessity of defying, and perhaps of resisting forcibly his father, he repeated the threat, adding, calmly:

"So stand aside, Geoffrey Marduke, or I must forget that you and I are called father and son."

"You have forgotten that these ten years, young man," replied Geoffrey Marduke, sternly. "It is time that you should at least begin to remember that we are father and son—"

"Out of my way, sir!" interrupted the commandant, haughtily. "Give way, or I'll order your immediate arrest, and if you resist, the consequences will be of your own making."

"By whose authority do you make these arrests?" demanded Geoffrey, resolutely keeping his position.

"I know what you would urge," replied the commandant, sternly. "You mean that as I hold my commission under James the Second it is now null and void, as James has fled. No such subterfuge shall protect this villain. Give way!"

Geoffrey Marduke, instead of complying, drew a short club from his belt, and with the rapidity and suddenness of light itself discharged a furious blow at the right wrist of the commandant, intending to thereby disable him.

Marlin was as quick of eye as he was powerful of arm, and jerking fiercely at the beard of the landlord at the very moment that Geoffrey struck, forced his great head to receive the full force of the blow, while at the same instant he struck down Geoffrey Marduke with his pistol-barrel.

The blow received by the landlord would apparently have felled an ox, for the club struck him fairly upon the head, nor was the muscle of Geoffrey Marduke to be jested with.

With a loud bellow like that of a wounded and

half-stunned bull, Kaspar Rheinband tumbled upon his hands and knees, his falling weight tearing his beard from the grasp of the commandant, and leaving the hand of the latter full of coarse red hair.

Geoffrey Marduke had not anticipated the prompt attack of the daring commandant. Years had passed since he had measured strength and quickness with him, and he had no just idea of Marlin's prowess. He fell heavily to the floor, bleeding profusely from the long, deep gash made across his temple by the pistol-barrel.

Marlin did not pause to gaze upon him, nor had he time, for Geoffrey Marduke had scarcely touched the floor before he was again upon his feet. The commandant, however, unsheathing his sword, swept it fiercely around him, endeavouring to force his way to his men, upon whom the smugglers had made instant assault as their leader drew his club.

The smugglers far outnumbered the coastguard, and were as well armed and far more desperate in combat.

The coastguard, though in general brave men, were not like the fierce and reckless desperados of the land and sea in the fury of combat.

Yet the presence and famed prowess of their young leader inspired them to battle courageously. Marlin Marduke had never failed to make complete an arrest when he attempted it, and he had often since his arrival in Anglesey had sharp and bloody struggles in the performance of his duties.

The coastguard had this confidence in their leader, and habits of discipline in their favour. They heard the cheerful shout of the commandant, as he dealt his fearful strokes right and left, and though they could not distinguish his form in the confused mob which surrounded him, they moved forward boldly, discharging their pistols as they advanced.

The main public room of the "Stuart Arms" had been the scene of many a fierce affray since Kaspar Rheinband was its landlord, and before, too, but all prior struggles were as mere brawls in the one inaugurated by the display of Geoffrey Marduke's club.

It had been known for weeks that William, Prince of Orange, had landed with an invading army and with the intention of forcing James the Second to abdicate the throne. Not only in Anglesey, but over all England, and even over a great part of Europe, the political excitement of all classes was most intense. It was plain that a new dynasty was to rule the English realm, and all parties, especially the lawless, anticipated a change of rulers, from the king to the heads.

In addition to this general and national excitement, the smugglers who made Anglesey their headquarters had of late been unusually bold in their operations by day as well as by night. A ship, the "Belle France," a large and costly ship, laden with rich and rare fabrics from the Mediterranean, had been wrecked upon the Iron Rocks, a dangerous shoal or reef about ten miles to the westward of Anglesey, a few days before our introduction to Marlin Marduke.

It had gotten abroad, as rumours will, that the "Belle France," had been decoyed to her destruction by the display of false beacons by some of the inhabitants of Anglesey and that the commandant of the coast had declared his intention to investigate the affair and to punish with the utmost rigor of the law every man or woman engaged in the cruel and treacherous work.

We say every man and woman for even the greater part of the women of Anglesey were more or less smugglers as well as the men.

It was reported, too, that the indefatigable and formidable commandant had learned that the "Belle France," after being fully decoyed to her destruction, had been plundered by the smugglers and their friends, as remorselessly and as recklessly as the Arabs of the African coast seize upon the hapless ships stranding upon their inhospitable coast.

As there was too much truth in both rumours, and as the number of the participants in these piratical outrages was very great, and especially as it was well known that Marlin Marduke was indefatigable in the prompt performance of his duty, greater excitement had never been in Anglesey than that which had filled the public room of the "Stuart Arms" for three or four days prior to the date of our story.

Rumours that Geoffrey Marduke had begun to suspect the presence of a government spy among the smugglers and that if Marlin Marduke should make an arrest of a certain man the old smuggler would be prepared to lay his hand upon this spy, and that Marlin Marduke intended to visit the "Stuart Arms" on this evening to make an arrest, had attracted an unusually large appendage of smugglers and landmen to the inn.

Thus Marlin and his force of eight men found themselves threatened by a crowd of unfriendly

men, at least threescore in number within the room. That there were many more already assembled without, quickly attracted by the rumour of what was transpiring, or assembling by concerted action, was made known by the tumultuous shouting in the street before and around the inn.

The news that King James had betaken himself to flight from Rochester to France had also gotten widely abroad, so that the whole town of Anglesey was in one great furor of excitement, and the various points of assemblage of people upon such occasions rapidly becoming thronged.

Marlin Marduke comprehended that it was Geoffrey's intention to take advantage of this excitement and confusion to prevent the arrest of his friends, and also, if possible, capture him. The action of the persons in the room instantly convinced him that he had taken a rash step in venturing into the "Stuart Arms" with so small a force, and a still more rash step in attempting to make a single arrest, much more rash still to attempt a double one.

But though everything seemed against him he showed no dismay, his face being firm and resolute, glowing with courage and confidence, while his long, sharp sword, totally unlike the short, broad cutlasses usually worn by members of the coastguard, circled before and around him like living flame, slashing here, gashing there, thrusting, wounding, slicing with a marvellous skill and strength which forced his numerous enemies from his path, and rapidly carried him among his brave and faithful followers.

Captain Herod as yet had given no attention to Marlin, his purpose being to kill outright the white-haired stranger whose triumphant foot had so scornfully pressed his breast.

We will, therefore, return to Varil and his stately master for a moment, and accompany them to the instant when Marlin Marduke had succeeded in rejoining his hand-grenaded little band.

CHAPTER VI.

The blood more stirs
To rouse a lion than to start a hare.

Shakespeare.

"CAPTAIN HEROD has his villainous eye upon us, and evidently means mischief," repeated Varil, as Elena darted away after warning the stranger, as we related in the chapter preceding the last.

The stranger seemed not to have heard this twice spoken alarm of his vigilant attendant. His eyes followed the rapidly retreating figure of the lovely girl, whose beautiful face, queenly form, majestic, and yet graceful, and whose air of purity of mind and heart had enchanted him.

"Sir," whispered the attendant, as he made bold to grasp violently the hand of his enraptured master, "sir, you heard the warning of the maiden?"

"What warning?" asked the stranger, in an absent way, while he sighed deeply.

But he was no dreamer, and instantly shaking off the strange fascination which had for a moment thrilled his faculties and driven his mind from the dangers of the present to the sorrows or joys of the past, the stranger drew his sword and prepared to heed the caution delivered by Elena.

"Let us move as near to the bar as possible," urged Varil. "Keep your eye upon Captain Herod, sir—his father will doubtless have his hands full in attending to the young commandant."

"I fear a very serious affray has been concerted, and for some very desperate purpose," remarked the stranger. "Certainly with no design against us."

"Not originally, sir. We are in at the culmination of some plot of these smugglers," replied Varil. "But Geoffrey Marduke will not fail to use the chance that has perhaps placed two whom he hates in his power."

"I was rash," said the stranger, in a self-reproachful tone. "I should have heeded your warning, friend Varil, and of you brave youth. But, Varil, saw you ever so amazing a resemblance in form and face?"

"To whom, sir, and in whom?" asked the attendant, for there was little clearness in his master's words.

"In the maiden, and to Lady Ida."

"I had not remarked it, sir."

"Why should you have remarked it, Varil?" sighed the stranger, as they gradually and cautiously edged their way along the wall of the room, and carefully avoiding separation from the pressure of the agitated crowd. "No doubt you and all the world except her miserable husband have long since forgotten Lady Ida—"

"Think of the present!" quickly interrupted Varil, as he again caught the fierce and malicious eyes of Captain Herod watching them. "I would these portmanteaus were well away, for if we should be attacked I may lose them."

"I am very thoughtless," said the stranger, at once

taking his own portmanteau from his overloaded attendant. "We must not lose this."

It was at this moment that the commandant arrested Kaspar Rheinland, and during the confusion which instantly followed the daring act Varil and his master reached the narrow entrance which led from the room behind the bar.

A surge of the excited mob for a moment separated them and forced them several feet from the bar, and at that moment the keen and watchful eye of Captain Herod comprehended their purpose to escape from the room by means of the private door behind the counter.

He had remarked that Elena paused for an instant to say something to the stranger, and had suspected that she had given him a hint to escape. He readily suspected this from the fact that it was well known that many a friendless stranger had owed his escape with life, if not with purse, from the "Stuart Arms" to timely warning from Elena.

He had been doubly careful, therefore, to keep his eye upon Varil and his master while he formed his plan of attack upon them.

The surge in the assemblage by which Varil and his master were separated and forced back from the entrance behind the bar was by no means accidental, but by the commands of Captain Herod to several of his followers.

The manoeuvre was suspected by the two strangers at the very moment it was being executed, and with a readiness and power gained by years of experience only they were speedily side by side again, and moving towards the bar.

"We must fight for it!" exclaimed Varil, for just then two stout fellows sprang over and behind the bar, and placing their backs against the private door, faced the strangers with menacing faces and brandished cutlasses.

Captain Herod had thus attempted to cut off the retreat of his intended victims, while he or some others of his followers were to attack them in flank and rear.

"True, we must fight for it," repeated the stranger, who then whispered some words to Varil, and the latter again took both portmanteaus upon his shoulders.

Scarcely had he done so when his master sprang fiercely upon the two men leaning against the door. The attack was as unexpected as it was violent and terrible. The coarse, heavy cutlasses of the two seamen were as mere toys before the powerful and lightning-like play of the stranger's long, two-edged and elastic sword. They were tall and athletic fellows too, used to hand-to-hand combat, daring and defiant, active and formidable indeed to opponents of their own class, and of their own cut and slash style of warfare. But he who sprang upon the points of their glittering blades with the activity of a leopard and the strength of a lion seemed but to cross steel with either before the swords of both were whirling in the air, and they themselves sinking helplessly to the floor, bleeding mortally from gaping wounds in their throats.

The collision could not be termed a combat, for it was all over in a breath.

The stranger had darted upon the two seamen, had flashed his sword but for an instant, though within that instant it had seemed to fill the air near it with glittering sparks. There was a clash, an oath or two, two screams of sudden death-agonies, and two men falling as helpless in their dying agony as two clouds of earth.

"Up!" cried the stranger, as he grasped the door and threw it open. "Up and away!"

"I will return to deliver or avenge you!" shouted Varil, as he darted past his master, carrying with him the two portmanteaus, for whose safety the stranger appeared extremely anxious.

The stately and sad face of the latter wore a strange smile of recklessness and melancholy as he instantly closed the door after his attendant, and placing his back against it faced Captain Herod and his enraged followers.

"You may avenge me, kind heart," he thought, as his dark and defiant eye flashed around upon the ferocious visages of his numerous foes, all eager for his destruction, "but it seems that Heaven has decreed that I am to die here."

He could have followed and attended Varil in his flight, but he knew that pursuit would be instant and overwhelming. It was necessary that one should remain to defend the escape of the other, and there were many reasons known only to the stranger why he should remain and not Varil.

These reasons we will endeavour to make clear as we progress in our story.

He saw a score of firearms levelled at his head, he heard the whizz and splintering of balls as they passed him and struck the door behind him, and resolved not to stand idly as a target for those who shrink from daring his sword, he sprang forward, and with

the first sweep of his sword cleared the space behind the bar of those who were pressing towards him for a near and fatal aim.

It was at this moment that the commandant succeeded in rejoining his small but faithful force, and that the private door behind the bar was opened and the form and face of Elena Rheinland appeared upon the lowest step of the staircase.

The room was soon a chaos of uproar and disorder; shouts, cries, screams, and groans, the clash of cutlasses and the explosion of pistols as either party discharged them made all a scene of confusion terrible to eye and ear.

The room too had begun to become filled with the smoke of burnt and burning gunpowder through which the lamps of the apartment flared and glared a sickly, ominous red.

Kaspar Rheinland had just recovered his feet, though scarcely his wits, for he clapped his enormous fat hands to his battered head, and bellowing with pain and rage, spun round and round like some huge top.

Such scenes and sounds met the attention of the maiden as she opened the door.

She threw one fearful and most anxious glance around until through the clouds of smoke and dust she recognized the form of her lover, visible but for an instant, and then lost in the markiness of the apartment.

The next instant her eye fell upon the stately figure of the white-haired stranger, who had just cleared the bar of his foes, and was pressing fiercely around.

She darted to his side and whispered:

"You are mad to remain! You will be slain! Come, I can save you!"

"One good thrust at him!" exclaimed the stranger, as Geoffrey Marduke passed near him.

But a surge in the crowd, made almost blindly for the room was dense with choking smoke, crowded Geoffrey from the stranger's view, and no longer delaying to retreat, he turned, and, with Elena, gained the door, closed it, bolted and locked it, and sprang up the stairs.

(To be continued.)

THE CHEERFUL FACE.

Next to the sunlight of Heaven is a cheerful face. There is no mistaking it—the bright eye, the unclouded brow, the sunny smile, all tell of that which dwells within. Who has not felt its electrifying influence? One glance at this face lifts us at once out of the arms of despair: out of the mists and shadows, away from tears and repining, into the beautiful realms of hope. One cheerful face in a household will keep everything bright and warm within. Envy, hatred, malice, selfishness, despondency, and a host of evil passions, may lurk around the door—they may even look within—but they never enter and abide there; the cheerful face will put them all to shame and flight.

It may be a very plain face, but there is something in it we feel we cannot express; and its cheery smile sends the blood dancing through our veins for very joy; we turn towards the sun, and its warm, genial influence refreshes and strengthens our fainting spirits. Ah! there is a world of magic in the plain, cheerful face! It charms us with a spell of eternity, and we would not exchange it for all the soulless beauty that ever graced the fairest form on earth.

It may be a very little face; one that we nestle on our bosoms, or sing to sleep in our arms with a low, sweet lullaby; but it is such a bright, cheerful face. The scintillations of joyous spirit are flashing from every feature. And what a power it has over the household, binding each heart together in tenderness, love and sympathy! Shadows may darken around us, but somehow this little face ever shines between, and the shining is so bright that the shadows cannot remain, and silently they creep away into the dark corners where the cheerful face is gone. It may be a wrinkled face, but it is all the dearer for that, and none the less bright. We linger near it, and gaze tenderly upon it, and say, "God bless this happy face!" We must keep it with us as long as we can, for home will lose much of its brightness when this sweet face is gone.

And after it has gone, how the remembrance of it purifies and softens our wayward nature! When care and sorrow would snap our heartstrings asunder, this wrinkled face looks down upon us, and the painful tension grows lighter, the way less dreary, and the sorrow less heavy.

The proprietors of the "Japanese" Paper Mill, at Westfield, Mass., are manufacturing wonderful articles from paper. The durability of their belting is remarkable; the belts which have been used in running their mills night and day for years are made from paper. It is fully as strong as the best oak.

taunted leather, and the demand for it is rapidly increasing. Indeed, it is now extensively used in many of the leading mills and factories, and has proved highly satisfactory. This paper is also used in the construction of boats; it is thoroughly impervious to water, while its light weight is an important feature.

A CORRESPONDENT writes that there is in the island of Skye a minister of one of the parish churches who occupies the pulpit which his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather have filled in succession, and who is training up his son to be his successor. Besides discharging the duties of the ministry in his parish, he is chairman of the school and parochial boards, road contractor for the district, a knowing judge of cattle, and occupant of three large sheep farms in addition to his glebe. He is vying on thescore, and yet he continues to discharge these multifarious duties and preach two sermons every Sunday—one in Gaelic and the other in English.

EDMUND STONE.

We have heard of self-taught and self-made men; they are to be found in every country and in almost every town, but how many can you find on the whole world to equal, in this respect, the Scotch lad, Edmund Stone? Edmund's father was gardener to the Duke of Argyll, and Edmund was born somewhere about the year 1690. At that time it will be readily understood that education in letters had not made much progress among the labouring classes. Edmund's father could neither read nor write, nor could any of his known relatives.

One day, while the duke was walking over his grounds, he found upon the grass, beneath a tree, a copy of Newton's "Principia," in Latin; and upon making inquiries as to its ownership he learned that it belonged to young Edmund, the gardener's son, then eighteen years of age. His grace was surprised that the youth should have learned to read Latin, and much more surprised that he should find interest in the intricate and abstruse problems of the "Principia." The duke sent for Edmund, and having assured himself that the young man really understood the work, he asked how he had gained a knowledge of these things.

"Your good butler," answered Edmund, "learned me to read ten years ago. When I had mastered the letters of the alphabet, the key to all knowledge was in my hands."

"But my butler knows nothing of mathematics," said the duke.

"No, your grace; but when I had learned to read, the masons were at work upon your house, and as I watched the chief architect I observed that he used a square, a rule and a compass, and that he made calculations on paper. I was bold enough to ask him the use of these things, and he was kind enough to inform me. Thus I learned that there was a science called arithmetic and a more advanced science called geometry. The architect showed me his books, and a grammar which were in Latin; so I bought a Latin dictionary and learned that language, after which I bought the mathematical books and studied them. I also found that there were excellent mathematical works in French, and I bought a French dictionary and learned that language. And this, my lord, is what I have done. It seems to me that one who has the will may learn everything when he has once learned the alphabet."

Such was the beginning of Edmund Stone. He died somewhere about 1750, having written and published several valuable mathematical works, among which were a Mathematical Dictionary, a Treatise on Fluxions and a voluminous edition of Euclid's Elements.

THE gathering of peaches at Montreuil, in the environs of Paris, is now drawing to a close. The year has been an exceptionally good one, and the value of the crop is two millions of francs. That sum will astonish no one when the fact is remembered that there are 600 growers at Montreuil, who raise nearly 60 millions of that fruit. For more than a month 500,000 arrive every morning at the central markets. There are three gatherings at Montreuil every year; the first takes place in July for the early sorts, the second at the end of August, and the third for the late peaches at the present moment. Large quantities of this famed fruit find their way London.

DELICATE PEOPLE.—There is constant sympathy expressed by robust people for those of slight physical constitution. We think the sympathy ought to turn in the opposite direction. It is the delicate people who escape the most fearful disorders, and in three cases out of four live the longest. These gigantic structures are almost always reckless of health. They say "nothing hurts me," and so they stand in draughts, and go out into the night air to cool off, and leave off their flannels in April, and get

their feet wet. But delicate people are shy of peril, they know that disease has been fishing for them, and they keep away from the hook. No trout can be caught if he sees the shadow of the sportsman on the water. These people whom everybody expects to die live on most tenaciously. We know of a young lady who evidently married a wealthy man of eighty-five years, on the ground that he was very delicate, and with reference to her one-third. But the aged invalid is so careful of his health, and the young wife is so careless of hers, that it is now uncertain whether she will inherit his wealth, or he inherit her wedding-rings. Health and longevity depend more upon caution and intelligent management of one's self than upon original physical outfit. Paul's advice to the sheriff is appropriate to people in all occupations: "Do thyself no harm."

EXPECTATIONS.

CHAPTER XXIX.

As the voice of the husband who had so bitterly wronged her once more smote upon her hearing after their long separation, as once more the kingly figure confronted her, and the noble face, albeit in scorn and fury, looked down upon her own, Joliette gave a low, gasping cry, and clung half-fainting to Rossitur's supporting arm.

Yes, it was thus they three had met again. How strangely this scene of their meeting resembled that of their parting so long ago! That was a scene of anger and jealousy in a leafy wood in the Tyrol; this was a similar scene in a park in England, and might almost have been deemed a continuation of the other.

"You do not speak," answered Sir Mark Trebasil, lowering above both Joliette and her protector, and regarding them with increasing anger. "Was my appearance so inopportune? Did I interrupt a love scene?"

"Joliette," said Rossitur, calmly, "let me take you into the abbey. Excuse me for a minute, Sir Mark. This is no scene for a lady to witness."

"I am a better judge of that than you," declared the baronet, adding, with another sneer: "Let the lady stay."

His tone was so peremptory that Rossitur deemed it wise to yield.

"What have you to say to me, Sir Mark Trebasil?" demanded the discarded young wife, coldly and haughtily. "Be as brief as possible, please; the evening is chilly."

Sir Mark Trebasil started.

He had expected to find Joliette the same shrinking, terrified young creature that she had shown herself in that parting scene in the Tyrolean wood, who would appeal to his mercy, and possibly in her supposed insatiable greed of admiration and coquettishness, would endeavour to rekindle his love for her; but this was no shrinking, terrified girl, no pleading, coquettish being. Joliette's great, sombre eyes, all light, met him—not beseechingly, but with cold and haughty gaze. The small, pale, olive face, with its vividly red lips, did not blench nor grow whiter under his fierce glances. The change in her increased his anger against her.

"And this is the wife I parted from in the Tyrol sixteen months ago?" he exclaimed, bitterly and half-unconsciously.

"No, it is not the same," returned Joliette, coldly. "The woman whom you wronged and insulted, Sir Mark Trebasil; whom you cast from you in scorn; at whose prayers and tears you mocked—she was your wife, who loved you, and who would have forgiven you much. She was a friendless girl, poor and homeless, who had none in the wide world but you; and you, tiring of her, repenting your mésalliance, rid yourself of her. Her love for you died on that night of bitterness and wrong. I am another woman, I acknowledge no tie between you and me. I am rich, honoured, esteemed. I have the fairest home in Cornwall, save your own. I have troops of friends, a pleasant household, a retinue of servants. I know no one in all the world whom I regard with such aversion, such actual, downright, hearty hatred as yourself. It is best to speak frankly. You see now that I am not the woman from whom you parted in the Tyrol sixteen months ago, do you not?"

Sir Mark regarded her with something of horror, as if she had suddenly developed a Medusa's head. He retreated a step, but did not answer.

"Whatever you have to say, be good enough to say at once," said Joliette, after a pause. "You will pardon me, however, for remarking that, as we are and must be henceforth strangers, I cannot comprehend why you should have anything whatever to say to me."

Sir Mark's blue eyes flashed like a sword that is drawn from the scabbard.

Joliette, in the disance, could catch something of those blue gleams.

"I have many things to say to you, but first of all—Mr. Rossitur will you remove your arm from that lady's waist?"

Rossitur withdrew his support from Joliette.

"We will also dispense with your attendance, Mr. Rossitur," said Sir Mark.

"If you dispense with Mr. Rossitur's presence, you must also dispense with mine," said Joliette, coolly. "Adrian possesses my entire confidence."

"Naturally, being your lover," sneered the baronet.

"Does he know that you are my wife?"

"He does," assented Joliette. "I have made plain to him the unfortunate relations that exist between us."

"Unfortunate relations! Indeed! If he is possessed of the smallest sense of delicacy, he will leave us to ourselves," added Sir Mark, directing a menacing look towards Rossitur.

The latter exhibited no sign of anger, but said calmly:

"Would it not be better for you to grant the private interview Sir Mark demands, Joliette? I will walk up and down the avenue within sound of your voice, if you should call me."

Joliette reflected, and yielded assent.

Rossitur walked away just out of earshot and paced the shaded avenue.

"Now, Sir Mark," said his young wife. "what have to say to me?"

"First of all, madam, is that fellow your lover?"

Joliette's face turned from white to red.

The baronet could not mark her change of colour, but he did note the alteration of her countenance.

"That question from you to me?" exclaimed Joliette, haughtily. "Sir Mark Trebasil, I will not hearken to your insults."

"Ah! the question touches you. You call him your friend, I suppose?"

"He is my friend."

"Your best friend, perhaps?"

"My best friend," echoed Joliette, firmly. "The best friend any woman ever had—good, true-hearted, unselfish, a brother in all but the name."

"A brother! convenient title," mocked the baronet.

"He is engaged to marry my cousin, he says. That engagement is supposed to blind and hoodwink me. I tell you that you and he do not know with whom you are battling, Rossitur is your lover. You dare to confess to me that he is your best friend. You love him better than all the world, perhaps?"

"Better than all save one."

"And that one?" cried Sir Mark, jealously.

"I decline to answer," replied Joliette, scornfully.

"I will only tell you what you must already know—that that exception is not yourself."

"I have a right to know who it is whom you exalt in your affections above even Adrian Rossitur," exclaimed the baronet, in growing fury. "Is—is the person a woman?"

"No, I will not be questioned farther. I spoke inadvertently."

"It is a man, then! Is it Vernon?"

"Sir Mark Trebasil, I will not be thus catechized. I am nothing to you, and you are nothing to me. Spare me the exhibition of your hatred and rage."

"It is Vernon. I am answered!"

Joliette would have denied this charge, would have protested that Vernon was nothing to her, but a timely sense of caution restrained her. In her impulsive defence of Rossitur she had been betrayed into an allusion to her greater love for her little son. She was horrified at her own unguardedness, and would have given much to have been able to take back her hasty utterance. To deny now a regard for Vernon would be to set Sir Mark's suspicions at work in new channels. She was obliged to allow him to retain the impression he had received.

Her silence was to Sir Mark farther confirmation of his erroneous impression.

"It is Vernon," he repeated, in a hoarse and altered voice. "I—I suspected as much. He told me that he loves you."

Still Joliette stood silent. She longed to repel this latest charge with indignation, but she dared not. It was necessary to use the utmost self-restraint and caution lest Sir Mark should obtain some clue to the existence of her child. Her heart throbbed quick and hard, her pulses beat heavily, but her brain grew clear and her mind calm and self-possessed.

"Shameless woman! False wife!" cried Sir Mark Trebasil. "You dare stand before me and own your love for Charles Vernon, you who are legally my wife, who are entitled to bear my name, which was never before unworthily borne—"

"Stop!" exclaimed Joliette, her passionate young voice ringing low and clear. "That I am legally your wife I cannot deny. It is my misfortune. That I am entitled to bear your name is also true; but do not be alarmed, Sir Mark Trebasil, I shall never claim your

name! You assail me fiercely. Suppose I were to retort upon you in kind? Let us not quarrel. The world is wide enough for us both. Let us walk our separate ways in peace. You left me, as you said, for ever. Why have you come back to disturb my happy life?"

"No doubt you were happy. I heard of you while I was in Russia, as rich, the mistress of Blair Abbey—"

"And so you hurried back to England? I see. You thought me poor—earning my bread as governess, perhaps, and you never made a movement towards finding me. You were well rid of your wife. But when you heard of me as rich you hastened back to England. Possibly you thought the lady of Blair Abbey a better match than Julian Stair's portionless daughter? Possibly you hoped to patch up a peace between us and unite Blair Abbey to your own estates. Is not this so?"

"Not all the wealth in England could tempt me to take you back again," said Sir Mark Trebasil, his temper blazing. "Not even the queen's crown could make you tolerable to me. You are not worthy to be my wife or to enter the castle which my mother ruled."

Joliette's face grew white as death.

"You do not want me. I certainly would never forgive your insults, even if you lay dying at my feet," she said, slowly. "And now that we understand each other, Sir Mark Trebasil, let me ask why you have returned to England?"

"I have returned to watch you. I place the honour of my family name in your keeping. I am returned to see that you keep your honour intact."

"But I do not bear your name."

"You have told Rossitur that you are entitled to bear it. Perhaps you have made similar boasts to others."

"Boasts! As if the fact were not my bitterest cross! I have told no one but Mr. Weston, Rossitur, and—and—" Joliette hesitated, adding: "Madame Falconer knew it."

"No doubt. What use does your lawyer intend to make of his knowledge?"

Joliette was silent again for a brief space. Then she said, quietly:

"Sir Mark, our marriage was a cruel mistake. Is there no way in which we can retrieve that mistake? We were married in Bavaria. I know nothing of Bavarian divorce laws; but it is not possible for us to secure a divorce? I would gladly give you back your freedom—"

"To secure your own? You would wade through all the mire of the divorce courts; you would drag my honoured name through a hundred miserable scandals; you would make me a byword and laughing-stock in order to secure your freedom to marry more suitably? I decline to entertain your proposition. We are yoked together unequally, but we must bear our yoke until we die. I will never release you save by my death!"

"Then I must wait until you die."

Something in her tones more than her words struck Sir Mark as strange and unnatural. The words lodged in his mind, to be recalled at a later period and invested with sinister and awful meaning. Even now he pondered over them, before he answered.

"You had better resign yourself to your fate. I shall never acknowledge you as my wife. I shall never interfere in your affairs beyond the one point of repressing your coquetries and compelling you to comport yourself as becomes your acknowledged ties. You shall have no divorce from me. You shall not proclaim our relationship. And I shall demand that you dismiss Vernon from your list of guests, and Rossitur from your house."

"I refuse absolutely to comply with such demands."

"Then I shall myself become your frequent visitor. I shall go and come at my pleasure, exactly as Vernon does or as any guest might do. I shall watch you and guard you from yourself. I shall call tomorrow openly in the character of visitor. I shall expect you to restrain the devoted attentions of your admirers into the bound of ordinary civility."

"Is there anything more you would like to say?" asked Joliette, ironically.

"If there is I will choose my own time to say it. I have returned to England for a purpose and I shall carry out that purpose. With your fickle disposition, with your little frivolous soul, what can you know of a nature like mine? Have I not suffered? Has not my life been made desolate? Have I not been deceived, cajoled, hoodwinked? Oh! woman, with your subtle beauty and your wicked soul, have you not wrecked my life? As you have meted out to me so shall I measure to you to return. Sooner or later I will make your life desolate as you have made mine. We understand each other? Tomorrow we will meet as strangers."

He turned abruptly, and strode down the avenue. Rossiter hurried to Joliette, and the baronet halted in the dense shadows at a distance and watched them.

"What did he say, Joliette?" asked Rossiter, anxiously. "How you tremble! Did he wish you to take his name—to acknowledge your marriage with him?"

"No. He declared that I was not worthy to bear his name, that he would not acknowledge me as his wife if I were Queen of England," replied Joliette, wearily. "He has vowed to desolate my life. Oh! Adrian, if I were only safe somewhere—safe with my boy—"

"You are safer here than you would be elsewhere. I think he will soon tire of persecuting you and will go away again. We must hope for the best, dear. We have but to conceal little Archie's existence for a few months or years, and that is easily accomplished. When Archie grows old enough to make his concealment difficult you can then boldly adopt him. Mr. Weston will plan all that for you."

"I have planned it all for myself," said Joliette, smiling faintly. "I am not hopeless while my boy remains to me."

Sir Mark watched the pair as they walked slowly to and fro in the shadow of the trees. His noble features worked as his blue eyes dwelt upon Joliette's slender figure, and the bitterness of an awful despair seized upon him.

"My wife! my wife!" he said to himself. "So young—so beautiful—so lovely! I love her with all my soul. Not all her fickleness and falseness has had power to quench my love for her. I could die by my own hand that she might be free. How her voice thrills me! How—ah, she lays her head on his shoulder! She's crying. He comforts her. I could kill them both! My only safety is in flight!"

He hastened to the spot where he had left his horse, mounted, and rode swiftly down the avenue, out at the lodge gates, and along the highway to the direction of his castle as if pursued by demons.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE morning following the meeting between the long-parted husband and wife was gray and wintry, with a chill, stifling wind and plentifully-falling snow. It was a day for home enjoyments.

Joliette remained secluded in her own rooms. Mr. Weston had not returned from Langworth. Adrian Rossiter and Charlot Lyle were practising a duet in the music-room. Mrs. Malverne wandered in and out of the stately rooms, discontented and ill at ease.

She had not been able to obtain a private interview with Vernon during the previous evening, and her desire to discuss with him her own plans and schemes had grown to an absolute anxiety.

"I managed to ask him privately, when he took his leave, to come this morning, as I had something to say to him," she said to herself. "But will he come? The weather is so unpleasant. Did he understand that I really desired to say something of importance?"

She looked from the windows, and finally wandered restlessly upstairs.

"I will call upon Miss Stair," she thought. "She piques my curiosity beyond endurance. She used to be the earliest riser at the abbey. What can have changed her so? It is eleven o'clock, and she has not shown herself this morning. Is she secretly an invalid? I wonder if she is still in bed. Perhaps I can stumble across a clue to her singular behaviour."

She knocked upon the door of Joliette's boudoir. No one answered her. She knocked again more loudly. No sound of life came from within. The widow's curiosity became unbearable. She tried the knob gently. The door yielded. She pushed it open, peering and listening.

"I believe the door was left unlocked by accident," she thought. "Miss Stair is certainly in bed."

After a moment's hesitation, she crept into the boudoir, and stole towards the door of the dressing-room. Both apartments were deserted. She hesitated a little, and then, putting on a bold front, she glided onward and peered into the bedroom.

Joliette was not there. The low French bed, draped with real lace, was in disorder. The great square pillows, ruffled with lace and decorated with embroidery, were spread upon convenient chairs, as were the snowy coverlet and fleecy blankets. The door of the bath-room beyond was ajar. Nothing was to be seen of Joliette anywhere.

"How very singular!" thought the spy. "Where can she be? She has certainly not been outside her rooms this morning—and just as certainly she is not in them. And where is her serving-woman? Ah, what upon earth is that?"

Her inquisitive glances had fallen upon a small object upon the white bedroom carpet. With an in-

credulous sort of cry, she sprang forward and pounced upon it, holding it up in one hand. She stared at it with dilating eyes.

It was a baby's sock! A tiny, short-legged sock of fleecy white wool shaped to a chubby baby foot!

The explanation of its presence there was extremely simple. Joliette, who loved her child with a young mother's passionate devotion, had taken him to sleep with her upon the previous night. Worn and agitated after her stormy interview with Sir Mark Trebasil, she had solace and comfort in the pressure of the fair baby head upon her bosom, in the clasp of the tiny, clinging arms, and in watching the innocent slumbers of her boy. It so happened that the sock had slipped from the baby's foot into the bed, whence it had fallen to the floor unperceived, when Mrs. Bittle had removed the bedclothing for exposure to the air. Master Archie had been returned to his secret home in the morning, and, after Joliette had arisen and eaten her breakfast, she had followed him thither. Mrs. Bittle had removed the breakfast tray, and had also entered the secret chambers, forgetting, by some unusual oversight, to lock the outer door of the boudoir. As, however, no servant other than Mrs. Bittle was ever allowed to enter Miss Stair's rooms, the oversight was not so unpardonable as it would otherwise have seemed.

Mrs. Malverne regarded the little sock in an utter amazement and horror. Then, suddenly recollecting herself, and fearing that her intrusion would be discovered, she hurried out of Joliette's room, making her way to her own.

"I begin to see my way to a big income," she said to herself, her pale eyes gleaming. "My suspicions have received considerable confirmation. Miss Joliette had visitors last night. They must have quitted the abbey before daybreak. If I had only been watching! But I will watch her now. I will be sleepless but what I will detect her, and then I shall gain from her any price I may choose to ask for my silence. Yes, my fortune is made."

She concealed the little sock in the depths of one of her trunks, which she locked securely, and then went to one of the windows and looked out.

The weather was not suitable for pleasure-driving, but the scheming widow had business in Langworth which she did not choose to defer even until the morrow. She had in her pocket the letter of inquiry which she had written upon the previous evening, bearing the address of "M. le Curé, Arpignon, Haute Pyrenees, France," and this letter she felt to be altogether too important to be trusted to the Abbey post-bag, although she had confided to it her letter to Sir Mark Trebasil months before.

"I must post it myself," she thought, "otherwise I shall be uneasy. I must not risk discovery. I will be artful and sly in accumulating my proofs, for a mistake may not easily be retrieved. I shall not have to account to anyone for my whim in driving upon a day like this. The servants may wonder, but let them wonder. And as I am going out anyway I may as well visit that cottage again to-day. I must see Meggy Dunn once more with that baby. My impatience will not suffer me to wait even a day for that visit. I will drive to Langworth, post my letter, and return by that out-of-the-way cutting upon which the cottage fronts."

She did not stop to deliberate. Having made up her mind to go, she rang her bell and ordered a close carriage to be made ready for her drive. She dressed herself warmly, muffling her person in cloak, furs and veil, and when the carriage was announced she descended and entered it, and ordered the coachman to drive to Langworth.

Her business in the little town was soon transacted. She posted her letter, matched a few German wools, procured some sheets of new music, and that was all. Re-entering the carriage, she ordered the coachman to return by the Long Cutting—a route considerably longer than that by which she had come. Then she settled herself luxuriously among the cushions, the fur rugs wrapped closely about her, and indulged in pleasant dreams of the future.

"I shall make my own terms with Miss Stair," she thought, exultantly. "I hold her safety and honour in my hands. She will be glad to bestow upon me half her fortune in consideration of my silence. I shall see Sir Mark Trebasil to-day, perhaps, and shall use every effort to win him. I think I may succeed there too. I understand the art of fascinating better than I did five years ago. I shall win them all, I hope, fortune, husband, title, everything. At any rate I am sure of the fortune."

Her heart beat high with hope and wicked resolve.

Notwithstanding her preoccupation she looked frequently from the window. When the carriage entered the Long Cutting and bowled along between the high banks, she leaned forward and seized upon the check-string. Presently she pulled it sharply. The coachman held in his horses to a walk, and Mrs.

Malverne, applying her mouth to the speaking-tube cried out, complacently:

"James, I am dying with cold. My feet are like lumps of ice. This hot-water can under my feet has lost its warmth. Is there no house near where we can get it refilled? I can never go on to the abbey—I feel as if I were perishing."

The coachman bestowed a sweeping glance about the lane.

"There's a cottage here, ma'am, among the trees—"

"Stop at the gate, then," said Mrs. Malverne. "I will go in and get warm while Harris fills the hot-water can."

The carriage drew up at the steps leading out of the lane to the cottage grounds. The footman alighted and opened the carriage door. Mrs. Malverne descended and hurried up the garden path, the footman following with the hot-water can. The lady knocked imperiously upon the cottage door, and the old woman whom she had seen upon the occasion of her former visit made her appearance.

"I am very cold," said Mrs. Malverne, shivering, "will you allow me to warm myself at your fire, madam, and will you permit my servant to replenish his can with hot water?"

The old woman replied by a cordial assent, and invited the lady to enter the low, neat kitchen. A fire was burning on the hearth, and Mrs. Malverne sat down before it, stretching out her hands to the hot blaze.

The footman obtained the required hot water and disappeared.

"This is very comfortable," said Mrs. Malverne, arising. "I am much obliged to you. Is Meggy in—Mrs. Dunn, I mean? Please tell her that Mrs. Malverne wishes to see her."

"Mrs. Dunn is gone away," replied the old woman.

"Gone away? Ah, to spend the night, I suppose, and has not returned yet?"

"She has gone for good and all, ma'am. She went up to Lunnion this very week. She's off for Canada, to join her husband, ma'am."

"Ah! And the child? Where is the child?"

"She took the child with her," was the reply, in a surprised tone.

Mrs. Malverne stood silent. This was an unexpected turn of affairs. Yet not for an instant did she accept the old woman's statement as entirely true.

"I daresay Meggy Dunn has gone to America," she thought. "At any rate it is quite possible. But the child is not gone! The child is near the abbey—so near that its nurse can bring it there at night and slip out with it in the morning before the servants are astir. And the more I think of it the more I am assured that Miss Stair would not suffer her trusty confidant to go to America. Meggy Dunn is domiciled in some cottage on the abbey estate, or is settled in Trebasil village. I'll unearth her at my leisure. I've the cunning of a fox. Now that I have gained the clue I'll follow it up to the full unravelling of the mystery!"

Having arrived at this decision, she bestowed a gratuity upon the cottager and took her leave.

During the remainder of her drive to the abbey she was full of speculative thought.

On arriving she went up to her own room, made her toilet anew, and descended to the morning-room.

It was untenanted. Rossiter and Charlot Lyle having gone out to examine the surface of the little lake with a view to skating upon it a few hours later. Joliette was still invisible. Mr. Weston was not yet returned. Mrs. Malverne wandered out of the morning-room and into the great, domed conservatory, with its wilderness of plants, its beautiful fountain, and its soft, warm air loaded with intoxicating perfumes.

A rustic seat under a dwarf palm tree afforded her a pleasant retreat. Blossoming orange trees were on every side. The breath of tuberose mingled with the purer, fresher fragrance of English violets; ten-roses, mignonette, and the heavier fragrance of exotic plants saluted her nostrils even while she looked out into the outer world, where the snow was falling and the wind was blowing fitfully.

"If Miss Stair were not so absorbed in her own affairs she would wonder what could take me out driving upon a day like this," she thought. "The walking is well enough, however. Will Vernon come? Can he have been here in my absence?"

These doubts were soon resolved. Carriage wheels were heard upon the drive, and presently a visitor was ushered into the morning-room. The widow glided to the door and looked in. As she expected, the visitor was Vernon.

She approached him, smiling a welcome.

"You see I am prompt to keep my appointment, Mrs. Malverne," said Vernon. "Where is Miss Lyle?"

"She has gone out to the White Waters with Mr. Rositur to ascertain what prospects there are for skating this afternoon. You find me all alone. How does Sir Mark Trebasil find himself to-day?"

"He is moody and reserved," replied Vernon. "If he were not so insensible to the charms of the ladies I should think he had been disappointed in love. He will call upon you to-day, Mrs. Malverne, and renew old acquaintance."

The widow's fair face flushed. Vernon marked her consciousness.

"I shall be glad to see Sir Mark," said Mrs. Malverne, quietly. "By-the-bye, you must have been surprised at my request for a private interview, Mr. Vernon. As it is uncertain how long time we may have to ourselves, I will come to the point of what I have to say at once. From many observations of yours, I have come to the conclusion that you and I have natures very similar. I think you could appreciate my hopes and ambitions and not despise me for them. I desire to secure a friend in you, an ally, who will assist me in my plans."

"Indeed!" said Vernon. "You surprise me. I am flattered in being chosen as your confidant. What can I do to further your plans?"

"I suppose I am doing a bold and unwomanly thing in appealing to you," said the widow. "But I have no manoeuvring mamma to work for me, and must work for myself. I believe I know you thoroughly, and I have no fears of losing your esteem. I want you to promise that you will not in any case, nor under any circumstances, betray my confidence. Give me that promise and I will say all I have to say."

"I promise, of course. You pique my curiosity, Mrs. Malverne. Pray hasten to relieve it," said Vernon, smiling.

"Let me begin by speaking of yourself. You are in love with Miss Stair?"

"It would not require a magician's insight to discover that—I do love Miss Stair."

"Your prospect of marrying her is not excellent. You are poor; she is rich. You have no home nor abiding place; she is the owner of Blair Abbey and twenty thousand a year, more or less," said Mrs. Malverne. "She can marry whom she will. She is splendidly beautiful, bright, witty, a star of the first magnitude. When she dawns upon the social firmament, the fashionable world will fall at her feet in worship. She will have suitors of rank and wealth. You see that, although woman, I can do justice to the charms of another woman! What chance will you have among so many exalted ones?"

Vernon's sallow cheeks reddened.

"Is this what you had to say to me," he asked.

"This is a portion of my intended communication," replied Mrs. Malverne, calmly. "Hear me out. I believe that you have not dared avow your regard for Miss Stair, lest she meet you with a refusal. I do not believe that she likes you. I believe she welcomes you here because you are Charlot Lyle's cousin and because you are an agreeable companion, but not because she has a vivid interest in you. I prefer to speak plainly. Now you can help me, Charles Vernon. In return for your services I can promise to secure for you an alliance with Miss Stair."

"You? How can you do this?"

"I have a powerful influence over her," said the widow, darkly. "I can induce her to heed my counsels. I can even persuade her to marry you."

"Do this and you may depend upon me to do anything you require," cried Vernon, ardently.

"I estimate Miss Stair's beauty at its full value. I could not afford to underrate it. I have a haunting fear that she may fascinate Sir Mark Trebasil."

"Your fear is not ill-founded," interrupted Vernon, drily. "I have discovered that Sir Mark Trebasil was acquainted with Miss Stair a long time ago, and that he loved her."

"He loved her?"

"Yes, and she threw him over for Adrian Rositur."

"Rositur is still her lover, and I know that she favours him. They walked together on the terrace a long time last night while you were so absorbed in Miss Lyle. And so Sir Mark was once Miss Stair's lover! Can this be possible?"

"It is the truth. I think he hates her now—"

"Then it must be your task to widen the breach between them," exclaimed Mrs. Malverne. "I will help you to become master of Blair Abbey if you will assist me to become mistress of Waldgrove Castle. There, you have it all in brief. I know that Jolietta Stair will marry you if I advise her to do so. My influence over her is without limit. Can you not influence Sir Mark in my favour? Can you not embitter him against Miss Stair? Can you not help me in return for the aid I will give you?"

Vernon was thoughtful for a brief space. The pro-

position of Mrs. Malverne had taken him by surprise, but it occurred to him that she might be of assistance in his plans of widening the breach between Jolietta and Sir Mark.

"I'll fall in with her proposal," he said to himself. "I can make a cat's paw of her. Miss Stair shall think Sir Mark is Mrs. Malverne's lover, and I will step in and marry Miss Stair at the proper moment. Then, having secured Jolietta, I will proceed to separate Sir Mark and Mrs. Malverne, even if I have to summon the powers of darkness to my aid. Sir Mark can die opportunely. I will form an alliance with the widow for our common purpose. I will make good use of her; but I shall play a double game. She shall not suspect my plans until I spring a trap upon her! I will win and she shall lose!"

But nothing of his treacherous design was shown in his smooth, sinister visage.

"I agree to your terms, Mrs. Malverne," he said. "But tell me what is the nature of your influence over Miss Stair? How will you persuade her to accept me as her lover?"

"That is my secret."

"There is a secret then? Well, let us make our compact. Tell me what you expect of me."

The two indulged in a whispered conversation at some length.

They had arrived at a final conclusion, and Mr. Vernon was about to take his leave when there was a bustle of arrival, the door opened, and the footman announced:

"Sir Mark Trebasil."

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

IN an ordinary open fire grate, 75 per cent. of the heat, resulting from the combustion of the fuel, goes up the chimney and is wasted, only 25 per cent. being radiated into the apartment.

NEW FULMINATE.—Picrate of lead has the property of detonating when struck, and may serve as a substitute for fulminate of mercury in percussion caps. An explosion recently occurred in a laboratory where chlorate of potash, picrate of lead and amorphous phosphorus were being triturated together.

ETCHING.—Mr. Haylar has discovered that it is possible to substitute glass for copper, and thus obtain an etching at much less cost than has been possible hitherto. Copper, too, being opaque, the engraver could not ascertain how his work was progressing, except by taking proofs. But now he is able to see at once what progress he makes, and to repair any defects as he goes on. Mr. Haylar has recently left Saxmundham to reside permanently in London.

A TRIPOD BOAT.—A novel boat velocipede was lately tried on the Alleghany river at Pittsburgh. The machine consisted of three floats, each three feet long by 15 inches diameter, two of the floats placed side by side, a short distance apart; the other a steering float placed in front, like the front wheel of a velocipede, and made moveable. A seat on slender rods rising from the two central floats supported the operator. Between the two floats were a pair of 8-inch paddle wheels worked by cranks from the driver's seat, where the front steering float was also operated. This novel machine, when set in motion, carried its inventor safely across the river at the speed of a slow walk. The paddles are evidently too small.

OTTO OF ROSES.—The manufacture is largely carried on in the valley of Kesanlik, Roumelia, the annual production of the rose farms of which amount to 4,400 pounds of the otto per year. As it requires about 130,000 roses, weighing some 57 pounds, to make an ounce of the oil, some idea of the extent of the plantations may be formed from the above given total. The flowers are gathered in the middle of May, and the harvest continues for three weeks. The blossoms collected each day are at once worked, in order that none of the odour may be lost. The process consists in distilling them in water and then causing the water alone to undergo distillation, when the oil is skimmed from the surface. The labour is principally done by women and children, at wages of about fivepence per day. The otto is always adulterated before transmission to market with one-third or one-fifth its quantity of geranium oil.

CORRUGATED IRON.—In making elbows in stove pipes, the sheet of iron, bent in tubular form, is slipped over a mandrel of suitable size. In the extremity of the latter are two clamps, each made in two pieces, hinged opposite to each other. The inner clamp, when brought over the pipe and its halves forced together by a lever on one of them, makes a slight, narrow swelling around the surface of the pipe. The other and outer clamp has a square inner edge, which forms a crease or plait on top of the iron and outside the elevation formed by the first-mentioned clamp. Both clamps are

securely fastened, and a powerful lever in the rear is worked, which bends the outer edge of the pipe upward. The clamps are then loosened, and the return motion of the lever actuates mechanism to carry the pipe a certain distance forward. The operation is then repeated until the pipe is bent to the proper angle. The machine is worked by hand, doing its work with great rapidity and accuracy.

COMPOSITION FOR PICTURE FRAMES.—1. To make composition ornaments for picture frames boil 7 lbs. of the best glue in 7 half-pints of water, melt 3 lbs. of white resin in 3 pints of raw linseed oil; when the ingredients are well boiled put them into a large vessel and simmer them for half an hour, stirring the mixture and taking care that it does not boil over. When this is done pour the mixture into a large quantity of whiting, previously rolled and sifted very fine, mix it to the consistency of dough, and it is ready for use. 2. Dissolve 1 lb. of glue in 1 gallon of water; in another kettle boil together 2 lbs. of resin, 1 gill of Venice turpentine, and 1 pint of linseed oil; mix together in one kettle, and continue to boil and stir them together till the water has evaporated from the other ingredients; then add finely pulverized whiting till the mass is brought to the consistency of soft putty. This composition will be hard when cold; but being warmed, it may be moulded to any shape by carved stamps or prints, and the moulded figures will soon become dry and hard, and will retain their shape and form permanently. Frames of either material are well suited for gilding.

FIREPROOF AND UNALTERABLE COLOURS.—Dr. Kosch, of the Chemical and Technological School at Vienna, has made an interesting discovery, which consists in the fact that certain colours may be made fireproof, and may thus be used for painting on china in precisely the tones required. The inventor has prepared a palette on which his coloured enamels may be used like ordinary oil colours, and may be painted in every conceivable combination of tints without being in the slightest way altered by the action of fire. Dr. Kosch at the same time makes use of a specially prepared enamel, which he spreads over the surface to be painted on, and by which the irregularities and porosities of the porcelain are as thoroughly concealed from view as if they were covered with thin smooth fine linen. The importance of such a surface medium will be fully understood by all who are practically conversant with the difficulty of preventing the irregular and undue absorption of colour which has hitherto stood in the way of producing artistic and carefully toned effects of colour on porcelain. Another and scarcely less interesting invention for which Australian art is indebted to Dr. Kosch is the fusion of gold, silver, and platinum with bronze, by which the most gorgeous effects are produced.

IMPROVEMENTS IN GUN-MAKING.—A new enterprise in gun-making is in progress at the Springfield Armoury, Mr. James Lee having secured from Congress an appropriation of 10,000 dollars for the manufacture of guns upon his model, for experiment in the field. Mr. Lee's gun was before the small arms examiners in Springfield a year and a half ago, and stood all the tests to the one of excessive charges, when a piece of the mechanism broke. Mr. Lee promptly remedied the difficulty, however, and, taking his gun to Congress last winter, so satisfied the military committee upon its merits as to secure from them an appropriation of 10,000 dollars for its trial. The gun in question is of extraordinary simplicity in construction, having only fourteen pieces in its make-up. These few pieces are so novel in arrangement that seventeen patentable claims are made upon them. There is only one screw and springs in the gun, which can be fired thirty-one times in a minute. Mr. Lee considers it the strongest, simplest, and safest gun in the world, and intends to patent it in England for competition with the Martini-Henry rifle. A rifle which the Evans Rifle Company, at Mechanics Falls, Maine, are manufacturing, is said to be capable of discharging thirty-four shots in nineteen seconds.

On Saturday, the 3rd October, the trial trip took place on the Thames of a remarkable new steam paddle launch. The little craft only draws six inches of water, being, it is believed, the shallowest steamer ever constructed in this country. Hitherto it has been considered either impracticable or unsafe for vessels of this kind to draw less than one foot of water. She is made of steel, and is 45 feet long, with a beam of 8 feet. The machinery, which is placed amidships, consists of a pair of inclined direct-acting engines, 5½ inches in diameter by 10 inches stroke, working at 130 lbs. per square inch, and driving paddles on each side 54 inches in diameter. The engines make 80 revolutions per minute, which in the run from the Temple Pier to Greenwich on Saturday was found to give a speed of about 8 miles an hour, the consumption of fuel being 40 lb. of coal per hour. Eighteen persons, including the crew of four, were on board, and her draught of water was then only 6 inches, which left

a freeboard of 16 inches. She has been constructed so as to accommodate 20 passengers fore and 20 aft, and when thus equipped she is not expected to draw more than 9 inches. She has been specially designed for the navigation of the upper waters of one of the rivers in Brazil, chiefly for the conveyance of passengers. Though the Thames was rather rough, the trial trip was very satisfactory.

WHITE OPAQUE GLASS.

ONE of the most interesting and important kinds of coloured glass, says Philip Fischer, is the so-called "bone glass," and yet very little has been said about it in glass literature. Its name hints at its composition and nothing more, especially since cryolite has come to be used in the manufacture of glass. This kind of glass is used for lamp shades and globes to protect the most important organ of the human body, the eye; and formerly it was both rare and expensive. Cryolite, however, has effected as great a revolution in the manufacture of white glass as petroleum has in the means of illumination.

What part the chief constituent of the bone, the phosphate of lime, played in the manufacture of the bone glass was not exactly understood, and a still thicker veil is drawn over the action of the fluoride of lime, soda and alumina, known as cryolite. It is to offer some explanation of this action that Fischer takes up this interesting branch of the glass industry. Phosphoric acid is at high temperatures a very powerful acid—so much so that no other acid is able to displace it. Hence we may reasonably suppose that the phosphate of lime remains suspended as such in the molten mass of glass. This, too, is indicated by the fact that when an excess of bone dust is added to the glass, or on suddenly cooling it, it is rough on the surface, but if the glass has the proper constitution it remains perfectly smooth.

How may the action of cryolite be explained? The power of hydrofluoric acid to etch glass and render it matt is well known, and depends on the decomposition of the silicates, taking from them a part of the silica, and the soda or potash, so as to form a compound known as fluosilicate of soda or potash, and then flying off in form of a vapour. We all know that this takes place to a greater or less extent in every cold, completely formed glass; how much easier and better would this process take place under the action of heat? Thus the phenomenon appears to a greater degree in the process of fusion.

THE MONARCH'S GIFT.

GUSTAVUS III., King of Sweden, passing one day on horseback through a village in the neighbourhood of his capital, observed a going peasant girl of interesting appearance drawing water at a fountain by the wayside. He went up to her and asked her for a draught. Without delay she lifted up her picher, and with artless simplicity put it to the lips of the monarch.

Having satisfied his thirst, and thanked his benefactress, he said, "My child, if you would go with me to Stockholm I would endeavour to find for you a better situation than you now have." "Sir, said the girl, "I wish for nothing better. I should not be happy anywhere else. My mother is poor and sickly, and has no one but me to take care of her and comfort her, and nothing you could give me would induce me to leave or neglect her." "Where is your mother?" said the monarch. "In that little cabin," replied the girl, pointing to a wretched hovel beside her.

The king went in, and beheld stretched on a bedstead, whose only covering was a little straw, an aged female, weighed down with years and sinking with infirmity. The monarch expressed his sorrow at finding her in so afflicted a condition. "Ah! sir," she replied, "I should be indeed to be pitted if I had not that good, attentive child, who labours to support me, and omits nothing that she thinks can afford me relief. I cannot be too thankful to Heaven for her."

Never, perhaps, was Gustavus more sensible than at that moment of the pleasure of possessing an exalted station. Putting a purse into the hand of the young villager, his emotion allowed him only to say, "Continue to take care of your mother; I shall soon enable you to do so more effectually. You may depend on the promise of your king." On his return to Stockholm Gustavus settled a pension for life on the mother, with a reversion to her daughter after her death.

A RATHER surprising piece of news comes from Vienna. The Sultan had been induced to abandon the ill-advised endeavour to declare his son his successor, and has recognised the legal heir.

ORIGIN OF FAIRS.—When the bishops and abbots observed crowds of people assembled to celebrate the festivals of their patron saints, they applied to the crown for charters to hold fairs at those times, for the accommodation of strangers, and with a view to increase their own revenues by the tolls their charters authorized to levy at those fairs. Hence

the multitude of attendants increased, some of whom were actuated by religious and others by commercial views. When a fair was held within the precincts of the cathedral or monastery it was not uncommon to oblige every man to take an oath at the gate, before he was admitted, that he would neither lie, steal, nor cheat, while at the fair.

BARBARA BRETHWAITE.

"He will come back," she said, "he will come back." It was a lingering tone of tenderness touched with a sharper sentiment. It was no girl in her teens who had uttered the words, though the lessening form going down the lane, after which the eager old eyes were looking, was the form of a man in his early youth.

"He will come back," she said. "He is not so mad as to leave me for a few hasty words. He knows Barbara Brethwaite, her strong will, her temper, proud spirit, but full heart, ay, and full purse,"—she said the last word with a little sneer—"he knows it all too well. He will come back."

And yet as the form faded out of sight among the oaks and beeches she turned into the house with a heavy sigh that did not speak assurance.

Life had been hard upon Barbara Brethwaite. From a proud and arbitrary father she had inherited characteristics of will and temper more masculine than feminine; and yet under them all had beaten a proud, impatient, womanly heart. She had quarrelled most needlessly with the lover of her youth, and then because he had forsaken her and married a girl of sixteen, soft-voiced, smooth-faced and helpless as a doll, she had cursed him in her heart of heart, and to his face with bitter tongue—and then had lived single all her life for his sake.

It seemed as if her course had had power, for nothing but trouble and misfortune followed Elwood Walton all his life. His business never prospered, his wife was an invalid, his children died one by one, till when at last his own death drew near there was left to him only one child—a boy of ten, named, after himself, Elwood. The mother was a helpless invalid, of weak character and indolent purpose. There was no money to be left for the support of either mother or child, and when, two days before he died, Barbara Brethwaite appeared at his bedside and offered to adopt the boy and make him the heir of her large property, the dying man had felt that he had scarcely the right to refuse the offer.

"I will consult his mother," he said; for the interview had been, at Barbara's request, a strictly private one.

"You will do nothing of the sort," Barbara had replied, tartly. "Do you think I would receive the boy at her hand? No; if you cannot in this moment give me your hand upon the bargain, you will never see my face again."

"But I do not know if I have the right, Barbara." "You have the undoubted legal right to do it," she said. "My lawyer waits below in my carriage. If you say the word, I will send for him, the papers will be signed on the instant—they are drawn already. The boy will remain with you until after the funeral," she said it firmly and without a tremor, "and then he will come to me. As for that worthless, white-faced thing yonder, she shall have no hand, no word in the matter. It is between you and me."

Life had brought many hard moments to Elwood Walton, but none harder than this. He had little respect for his wife, it was true, but he had yet left some traces of self-respect; and, below all, he had never ceased to feel some lingering tenderness for the strange woman who sat beside his bed. He was weak by nature, and she was strong; he craved love and tenderness, and he knew, better than any one else in all the world, that she could give them both, in full and overflowing measure. She was rigid and stern to all the world, but he knew that she could love both passionately and truly.

He reached out his hand to her. She would not take it.

"Give me your answer," she exclaimed; "yes or no."

"Barbara," he said, "have mercy. Speak gently to me once. You ask from me my boy, who is, what my wife never was, the life of my life, and yet I would not treat her unkindly; and that is what you ask me to do. Oh, Barbara, I know your heart; it is warm and true. Speak gently to me once; call me Elwood, as you used. You know your power over me. You know there has never been a day for twenty years when I would not have bartered everything but honour for your love. I am dying now. Once, only this once, be gentle with me."

Her eyes were glittering and dewless, but they burned with a passion which was terrible to witness, because it was so truly a flame lit in her very soul. Her

breath came hard, almost in gasps, but she put her hand in that of Walton, and, stooping, pressed her lips to his.

"Elwood," she said, "I love you to-day as I never loved you in the dew of my youth. I will be kind to your boy. He shall take your place in my heart—till we meet in Heaven. Give him to me; say this moment that he is mine."

Her arms were around his neck, his head upon her breast.

"He is yours," he said. "Heaven forgive me if I have sinned against his mother."

She rose and swept swiftly out of the room, locking the door as she went, and passing the pale and weeping mother, so soon to be a widow, with a gesture of contempt. In three minutes she returned with her lawyer, and unlocking the door, entered the sick man's room. In a half-hour it was all concluded, and she returned to her home, carrying in her hand the document which made her the owner of Elwood Walton's child. The mother's rights were blotted out for ever. For ever, she said to herself, for ever.

From that hour Elwood Walton was never again conscious. In two days he died. He had a handsome funeral, provided by Barbara Brethwaite. When it was over she took her boy—her boy now, and drove him home in her sombre carriage, behind her stately-stepping bays.

The mother? Well, the least said of the mother the better. She had loved her husband, she had loved her boy, in her feeble, inert fashion, surely, yet in such fashion as Heaven had given her to love. Her husband had been torn from her by death; her child by a foe yet more ruthless. She was left with literally not a pound in her purse, and debts incurred through illness hanging over her. She struggled with her fate for a season—wished to die, tried to die, but was thwarted; and so at last accepted, with the resignation of despair, the only fate that was left for her—lingering out a few years. She was only one of a thousand, nay, one of many thousands.

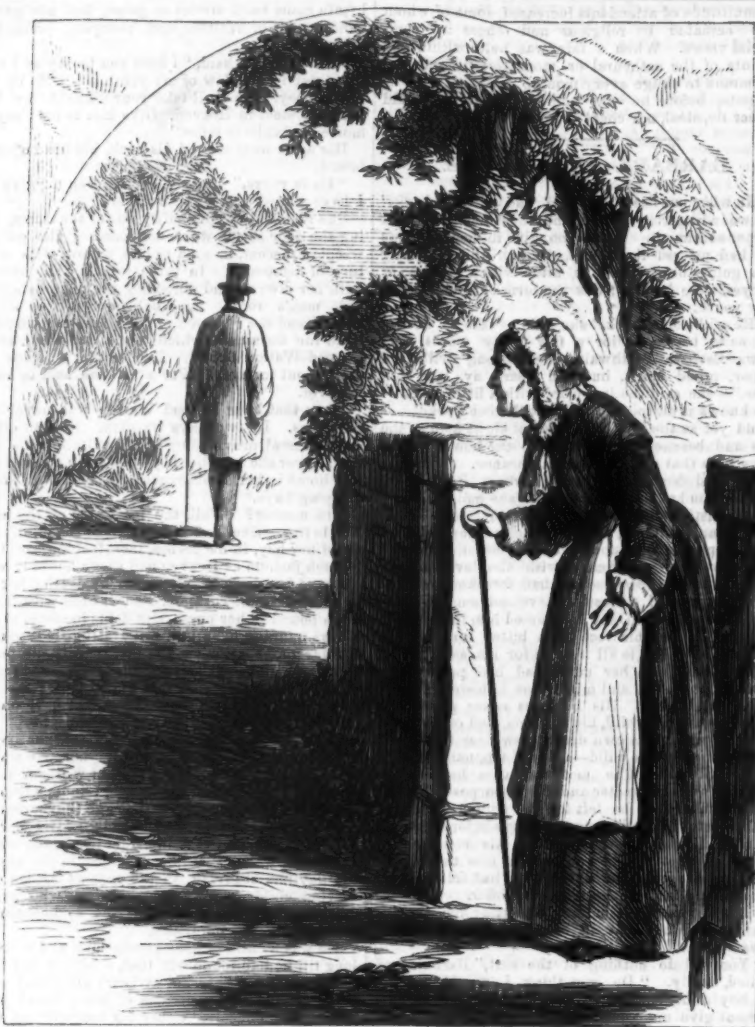
From the day of his father's funeral, her boy had never known one word concerning her. He was only ten years old, and neither strong of will nor demonstrative in affection. Yet he had a tender heart and some solid virtues, only at that age they were in the nascent state. So he succumbed to Miss Barbara's determination, and took life from her hands with few questions, working, if he must work, in the night; in the daytime studying, in the curious fashion of observing children, the strange being who presided over his young life, and striving to accommodate himself to her peculiarities.

He was a child of keen perceptions, and it was not long till he had found out that, arbitrary and forbidding as was her exterior, at heart she loved him as he had never been conscious of being loved before. She seldom consulted either his tastes or his wishes indeed, but in her own impulsive fashion she lavished upon him, not caresses indeed, but more substantial benefits. He was a slender child, and cared little for outdoor sports, yet a pony was provided for him, and ride he must, will he nill he. He was not fond of study, but tutors came, and he was put through a most solid and substantial course of education. He doted on flowers, and would have been glad to have had a greenhouse and to have spent half his time in it; but this Miss Barbara voted an effeminate employment, and so banished all green and growing things from her domains. And yet, in spite of all these contrarieties, the two got on not ill together.

Miss Barbara would not trust her favourite at school, so his education was pursued wholly at home. Sometimes the constant restraint of her presence and her will was irksome to him, but because he was not strong of purpose, and as he grew older and knew how from his early experience to appreciate the unstinted blessings of his outer life, he schooled himself to obey his patron's will as few young men would have done. Besides, he had no vicious tendencies, and until he was twenty he scarcely realized to what an extent his nature was tyrannized over.

But the training which a youth may endure is not fitted for even the most inert specimen of manhood. Miss Barbara had an idea that a protégé so reared as Walton had been could not fall, through gratitude and habit, to become the companion and solace of her old age. It was for that that she had intended him. She had not designed that he should adopt any business or profession. She had money enough; there was no need of that. Neither had she intended to introduce him into general society. Her own society—a small circle of ancient people who were as much astray from the world of to-day as she was—these must content him.

At twenty, as I have said, Elwood had scarcely rebelled against these arbitrary restrictions. But the longest dawning deepens into day at length, the latest spring bursts into summer by-and-bye. Easy, inefficient, and somewhat self-indulgent by nature, the



["HE WILL COME BACK."]

charms of woman were sure to present to a nature like Elwood Walton's the strongest temptation.

Miss Barbara herself was too astute not to be aware of this fact, and she had provided for it by singling out of the rather narrow circle of her acquaintances a young lady whom she designed that Elwood should marry.

Ellen St. John was a penniless orphan of good family. She was of amiable temper, good manners, and was in her way a beauty. She was sure to bow meekly to the rule of her husband, and the husband, of course, being Elwood Walton, would in turn bow meekly to Miss Barbara's rule. What more could be desired?

So Elwood was adroitly set at the work of courtship, and for some months all things seemed to progress smoothly.

Miss St. John was, as I have said, penniless, but she resided with her uncle, Henry Ware, who was her guardian, and had two or three well-grown boys, jolly, companionable young men, who treated Ellen like a sister, and upon whose abounding spirits and somewhat exuberant ways her gentle, courteous manners were calculated to produce an excellent effect. Both her uncle and aunt, therefore, felt that her presence and influence quite compensated for the expense she was to them, and made her most cordially welcome in their family.

For two years before the time of which we are speaking Ellen had been away from home at school. While there she had formed an intimacy with one of the young ladies much older than herself, and of a very different character. It was indeed difficult to say what was the bond of union between Ellen St. John and Constance Cavaire. Ellen had indeed a fair exterior and gentle, ladylike manners, but Miss Cavaire was a beauty of the regal and dominant order. She was tall and queenly of stature, with regular features and fathomless black eyes that seemed to look straight through one, and the presence and carriage of an empress. At least, it was in some such fashion

as this that Elwood Walton's musings ran, after his first interview with her. For on this particular summer fate had sent her down to Kenwood to visit Ellen, and of course among the first of her acquaintances was the lover of her friend.

If the truth must be told about Constance Cavaire's impressions of Mr. Walton, they were simply too faint to be transcribed. She had not at first understood the position which he held, since, as he had not yet declared himself, Ellen had been discreet enough to refrain from all mention of him in her letters.

Miss Cavaire was a lady who had her eyes well open to the world, and, though Elwood Walton was in himself, to her experienced gaze, a most insignificant person, when she learned, as she was not long in doing, that he was heir prospective to a fortune estimated in figures which even to her ears sounded respectable, she began to pay him more attention. Miss Cavaire had a due and proper respect for money, but she was also coldly critical in the matter of men. Her first tangible ideas concerning Walton were, it must be confessed, somewhat against him.

"A raw youth," was her mental estimate, "with some native excellences, but wonderfully deficient in training. What sort of a life can he have led heretofore, I wonder?"

Speculating thus, she chanced to make the acquaintance of Miss Brethwaite, and instantly the whole mystery was laid bare to her view. She had learned, by this time, the prospective relation between Mr. Walton and her friend.

"It is a shame," she said, "to marry my pretty Ellen to a crude and ill-trained boy like this. I see the old lady's plan. She has one poor orphan under her especial and minute control, and, lest a wife might cause him to rebel, she proposes to add another orphan, of gentle, amiable disposition, to her stock. This marriage is the worst thing in the world to befall either of them."

So far as this she was quite certain that she was right; beyond that point she made no plan.

It soon became evident, however, that Elwood was attracted in a quite uncommon way by Miss Cavaire. If she sang he hung over the piano like one entranced. If she promenaded the lawn, to dance attendance upon her and carry her fan was an ecstatic delight; and once, when she kindly permitted him to dance with her, his joy was so overflowing that the whole company noted it.

Barbara Brethwaite happened to be present upon that occasion, and her blood was up. She went immediately to Mr. Ware, and demanded of him that by some means he should get this dangerous young woman removed from Elwood's vicinity.

But Mr. Ware was wary.

"It is not easy, Miss Brethwaite," he said, "for me to send Miss Cavaire away, even if I so desired. She is Ellen's friend, and, I must say, a very engaging girl. We like to have her here, and really I do not think you can accuse her of having given Elwood any encouragement to fall in love with her."

"Encouragement?" exclaimed Miss Barbara, sharply. "How much encouragement do you suppose a boy like Elwood needs to fall in love with such black eyes and such a dashing air as hers? You know very well that my heart is set upon his marrying Ellen. You can but see the advantages of such a match to your side of the house, and I call upon you, as your niece's guardian, to prevent the adventures from running away with my boy."

Mr. Ware had no desire to offend Miss Brethwaite, neither would it please him to see the match broken off between the two young people. Still, he could but feel that, mainly owing to his training, Elwood was yet very immature, and far too inexperienced to be married out of hand without a word on his own behalf, without great danger of after rebellion when he came to know a little more of the world. If after a wider knowledge of women Elwood should still prefer Ellen, it would greatly please him; but he felt keenly the danger to his niece's happiness of such a marriage as this which Miss Barbara had planned. He therefore treated the meddlesome spinster coolly.

"Indeed," he said, "I cannot see the slightest danger in the present aspect of affairs, beyond the possible chance of an innocent flirtation. Miss Cavaire, I happen to know, is not at all likely to fall in love with a young man so many years her junior. Nor can his fortune in prospective be any great incentive, since I am positively informed that she has already refused offers from men in actual possession of much larger fortunes than Elwood will be likely to inherit. I confess that, under the circumstances, I see nothing better to do than to let matters take their own course."

Miss Barbara went away highly offended. Of course there could hereafter be but one feeling between herself and Miss Cavaire, namely, open and undisguised hostility.

Indeed, Miss Cavaire, who had studied Elwood faithfully, and saw how some good and strong points in his character were thoroughly obscured by the domination which Miss Barbara exercised over him was quite inclined to believe that the very best service she could render the young man was to set him, free from Miss Barbara's power. She had not a particle of love for the youth; her feeling for him was rather the feeling with which she might regard an innocent young kid who was clutched in the talons and being carried off by a fierce old eagle.

Miss Cavaire was an experienced fisher of men; she knew all and even more of the subtleties of angling than ever were revealed by quaint old Isaac Walton.

It was not therefore in any manner difficult for her to keep this young gudgeon dangling about her hook all summer, without either allowing him to swallow it whole, as he would gladly have done, or yet involve herself in any charge of treachery to her friend. But she had no intention of leaving without an explanation.

Consequently, one bright summer day, when the just air was tinged with the haze of coming autumn, she walked out with him into the deep, cool woods that bordered Mr. Ware's estate.

No bird upon the bough was happier than Elwood that day. They were seated at last upon a fallen moss-grown log, and Elwood felt that his hour had arrived.

"Dear Constance," he said, with an eloquence with which nothing but love could have inspired him, "dear Constance, how lonely this place will be when you are gone. It seems to me that I have never lived at all till this summer. When you go all that makes life worth having will go with you. I know I have nothing to offer you in comparison with your beauty and your nobility of soul, but if you could give me just one little ray of hope to live upon, I would try to make myself more worthy of you, and

the devotion of my whole life should be yours. Oh, Constance, can you not bid me hope?"

"My dear Elwood," said Constance, gravely, "I have known what it was in your heart to say to me for the past month, and I have permitted you to say it to-day because I thought you would be stronger when this interview was over. I have trusted both myself and you enough to believe that I could speak and you could hear some solemn truths in a manner to do you good. Believe me, dear Elwood, I should not have given you so much of my friendship as I have, if I had not seen in you sterling and true virtues, which, however, are sadly in need of development. I know well that you owe much to your protectress, but no man owes any duty paramount to the duty he owes to himself. It would, I truly believe, be better for you that you should never inherit one penny of Miss Brethwaite's money, rather than that by waiting for that inheritance, and leading meantime an idle and vapid life in expectation of it, you should fail to develop your own powers, your own manhood."

Elwood was listening with downcast looks and blushing cheeks.

"Dear Miss Cavaire," he said, "I knew that I was not good enough for you, but I did not before realize how great was the difference between me and such a man as should be worthy to be your protector through life. I thought it was gratitude to Aunt Barbara which made me so contented to remain here in perfect dependence upon her will; but I see now, with deep mortification, and a sense of unutterable disgrace, that it has been an unmanly reliance upon her bounty. Dear, dear Constance, will you tell me one thing more? If I leave this place and make my way to an honourable position in the world, will you let me cherish some little hope that by-and-by, in that far-away time, you will, if you are not meantime married—for I will not be so ungenerous as to bind you with a single tie—but, if you should not marry meantime, will you let me hope that I may find some favour in your eyes, and stand an equal chance with all the rest for your hand?"

She smiled at his humility and his enthusiasm, and meantime permitted him to kiss her hand.

"I shall make no promises," she said, "neither shall I forbid you any grace you may gain from hope. Only remember this—to try and fail would be far worse than not to try at all. Miss Barbara's thousands certainly count for something in the scale, and it is not worth while to throw them overboard utterly, unless you are sure that it is in you to win something in the place of them. Do not be spurred by vanity and a rash enthusiasm into an undertaking in which, if you fail, you may sink into a more than ordinary despair."

He thought for a moment silently.

"If I had only one friend to help me," he said.

"Well, I have thought of that," she said. "Maybe I can be that one friend. If you had your choice in occupations, what would you prefer to do?"

"How can I tell," he said, smiling, "who never have given a moment's thought to the subject?"

"You write a good hand," she said; "you are quick at figures. I have a friend who is a banker. Those two qualifications, coupled with an incorruptible honesty, go far in a banking house. If I get you the place of clerk for him, will you do your best to fill it?"

He clasped her hand, and then a sudden burning blush overspread his cheek and brow.

"How can I owe everything to you? I who ought to be bestowing favours upon you rather than receiving them."

"My dear," she said, in a sort of elder-sister fashion, "you can never bestow anything upon me, or any one, of comparable value with a fine-strung, true manhood. That is the favour that I am asking at your hands."

"You shall have it, or at least it shall some day be mine to offer you," he said.

In a week's time the situation of bank-clerk in the great house of Osborne and Co. was offered him and eagerly accepted. Not till that time did he approach Miss Barbara upon the subject. The storm which followed I shall not attempt to describe. Miss Barbara was neither frugal nor dauntless in the use of expletives when she found that her commands were unheeded, her authority absolutely set at naught. It was in that unreasoning outburst of fury that the young man learned for the first time what had been the fate of his mother, and this knowledge sank like a millstone into his heart. From that moment he was resolved that before he would ever again accept another penny of Miss Barbara's money he would beg his bread from door to door.

It was in this mood that he left her, going down the green lane in the early twilight, never looking back once, but pressing on, with bent shoulders and face overcast, towards the evening train which was to bear him to the great city.

And the fiery-hearted old woman stood looking after him through the rosy twilight, a tumult of passion and yearning in her veins and the hopeful yet half-despairing words upon her lips:

"He will come back, he will come back."

Life had gone hard with Barbara Brethwaite. She felt it as she retreated into the house and sat down in her own peculiar nook, around which the shadows were gathering, and reviewed her past in a mood which bordered upon despair.

"Will nothing ever love me well enough to live with me?" she said. "I have lived alone all my days, for what has this striping been to me of all that I needed, and now must I go down into the cold gray shadow of death, alone, alone, alone? There are women by thousands who with my money would not find my fate—they could manage somehow to buy themselves the semblance of love, and make it satisfy them. I could never do that; but I snatched this boy out of the very jaws of death, and brought him up to love me, and he did love me. He was so like his father, so like, so like, and growing more and more daily into his very image—I might have known, I might have known—and yet I think he would have been true if it had not been for that girl with her great black eyes. Another woman; always some other woman to step between me and that which I court."

It was not in Barbara Brethwaite's nature to remain long in this mood and not find vent for it. She rose at length, and going into her dressing-room, put on her richest robe, a heavy silk of royal crimson, edged with lace creamy with age. Diamonds flashing upon arms and neck and forehead, and a heavy gold chain wound thrice about her neck and depending low upon her breast, gave her the majesty of a queen. Her complexion was faded, but she scorned all artifice, and her fiery eyes gleamed out from under her gray and bushy eyebrows in strange contrast with wrinkles and yellow tints. She had previously called her carriage, and now, with her gold-headed stick in hand—upon which she was not ashamed to lean because of her infirmities—she drove straight to Mr. Ware's house and called for Miss Cavaire.

Constance had been forewarned by a glimpse through the blind of the honour which awaited her, and, in spite of her strong nerves, she went down to the parlour with a little pallor upon her face, a trifle of tremor at her heart.

"Miss Cavaire," said Barbara Brethwaite, with great directness, "I have come over here to see how you would look after having robbed an old woman of her greatest treasure in life. Do you find the exploit exhilarating? Has it increased your self-respect? You are young; I am old; handsome, which I never was. You are poor, I hear, but might marry rich. The man I loved deserted me, and I could never marry, at all. I took his son, a penniless orphan, and brought him up, intending him to be the staff of my old age, and you, out of mere wantonness and folly, have stolen him from me, not because you desired him for yourself—you would scorn such a boy as he—but merely to exhibit your power over what was mine."

Hitherto the old woman had been cool, but now, with the fatality of her angry temper, she began to wax warmer.

"I merely did," said Constance, politely, "what I thought to be for the young man's good."

"And who, I pray, constituted you the judge of what was for his good? Who made you ruler over me or my fortunes? Who gave you any right to interfere between me and mine? I tell you I had a right to that boy. I loved his father as that pale woman whom he married never could. The child she bore I saved from starvation and death. It was mine—it was mine. He loved me till you came, and I will have him back again, or he shall die. No other woman shall win him from me except at my good will and pleasure. It is a long road that has no turning, and your evil day may come yet. The day may come, I say, when your heart may be set upon the love of some human creature, man or child. I bide my time. You will learn then, whether I am in the flesh or out of it, the weight of an old woman's curse."

She shook her gold-headed stick as she spoke, and glaring fiercely from under her bushy gray brows, turned and slowly left the room without another word.

She went home, and shut herself up in her room, and was seen no more for a week.

At the end of that time she came forth looking indeed ten years older, but in every other respect quite her old self.

After a few days she sent for Mr. Ware, and made her will, disinheriting Elwood altogether, and devising her estates to Ellen St. John, on the sole condition that Ellen should spend an hour each day with her as long as she lived; unless excused by her express permission.

I do not think Ellen Ware felt this service from the first altogether an agreeable one; but one can easily imagine that it did not seem to her a very wearisome tax to pay for a fortune which should render her, probably before many years, entirely independent.

What she thought about displacing Elwood she never told. Certainly it must have been a fastidious nature that could have interposed an objection to taking the place of a false lover; a man who, after being tacitly engaged to her, should desert her for another, and then at the behest of that other should give up fortune, friends, all that had hitherto constituted his life, and without a word of farewell betake himself to another world. As for Mr. Ware, he was inclined to think the fortune without the young man a decided improvement upon the fortune with an encumbrance.

Elwood meantime was working patiently away at his clerk's desk. He possessed no brilliant endowments, but he was faithful and steady, and was forming day by day the character of a trusty man of business.

Charles Osborne, the head of the great house he served, was a distant relative of Miss Cavaire, and having heard the story of Elwood's life was the more disposed to smooth the way to his advancement. Not that he could hope to be anything but a bank clerk for many years yet, but Mr. Osborne now and then invited him to his house, and on many occasions took pains to instruct him in the true principles of finance. Often and often Elwood thought, during the first three years of his engagement with Osborne and Co., that if Miss Barbara's fortune had come to him without this training which he was getting it might have been more a curse than a blessing.

At the end of that time Miss Cavaire was married to Mr. Osborne. It was not so great a shock to Elwood as he had imagined three years ago that such an event would be. He had learned by this time how crude his ideas of life had been; how little likely a marriage between himself and Constance was to have eventuated happily. Of all the guests at the wedding, I doubt if any presented sincerer congratulations than Elwood Walton.

It was not long after this event that Elwood formed a resolution to go down to his old home. He had indeed no hope that Miss Barbara would receive him, but, after all, his only recollections of childhood and youth centred there; and, if the truth must be told, he had a slight desire to know what might have happened to Ellen St. John. That she was now the favourite of Miss Barbara, that she, in fact, had stepped into his shoes, he was not at all aware.

It was evening when he reached the little station which terminated his railway journey. Having supped already, he left his baggage at the station and strolled down the green and shaded lane which led to Mr. Ware's house. He had fully made up his mind that he should not call at Miss Barbara's. Since the night when she had in her rage informed him of his mother's fate he had felt that not even gratitude for all the favours which she had lavished upon him could induce him to forget the hardness of her heart. But he would like to see Ellen St. John once more, he thought. His position at Osborne and Co.'s was now assured and his salary was respectable. He had even saved something from it, which, by judicious investment, made him feel that the foundation of his fortune was secure. Ellen St. John was an orphan and portionless, and if she had not grown too ambitious in these passing years and were still heart-whole, it seemed to him not impossible that he might yet win her favour.

As good fortune would have it, he had not proceeded far upon his tour to Mr. Ware's before he met Ellen in the lane.

It was nearly dusk, and she was returning from an afternoon with Miss Barbara. It was a wearisome task—she felt indeed it was growing daily more and more wearisome—to sit by the old woman, to bear her venomous reflections upon the hardness of her life, to minister to her taste for scandal, and not infrequently to bear in her own person the effects of her arbitrary disposition. But Ellen St. John, though of a mild disposition and amiable to a fault, was a girl of great steadiness and persistency. Having undertaken this task and undertaken it too with a motive which no person suspected but herself, she was not the one to grow weary and relax her efforts in its prosecution.

In all the three years which had passed she had not heard from Elwood, except indirectly. She knew, however, of his excellent habits; that, though he had manifested no brilliant traits, he was still much beloved and greatly trusted by those around him. If Miss Cavaire had given her some uneasiness years ago, that was all past now. Miss Cavaire was married, and if she had the slightest interest in the residuum of Elwood Walton's affections no creature dreamed of it. Indeed, people had come commonly

to think that she was bent wholly upon winning Miss Barbara's fortune in the first instance, and that after that she would look out for such a lover as befitted an heiress. But, as no one except Mr. Ware knew that the will was actually made, even this conjecture had not travelled far; and, as I have already said, Elwood had no suspicion of the real state of the case. It was therefore with a simple and undisguised pleasure that he met Miss Ellen, and extending his hand to her, exclaimed:

"Good evening, Miss Ellen; fortune has favoured me truly. I was on my way to your uncle's house, but it is much pleasanter to meet you in this quiet lane and have a little chat by ourselves. I am dying to know all the news of these three years past, which you no doubt can tell me."

At his first salutation Ellen had grown a little pale and shrank back; but in an instant she extended to him her hand, and blushed all over her face and to the roots of her beautiful hair.

"Indeed," she said, "Mr. Walton, you have surprised me so that I hardly know how to answer you. I am very glad to see you home again. And Miss Barbara will be delighted. She has always said you would certainly come back."

"Pardon me," said Elwood, a little coolly, "it is not at all certain that I shall visit Miss Barbara. The breach between us is so wide that I do not see that it can ever be bridged."

"Oh, but, Mr. Walton," pleaded Ellen, "you surely will not go away without calling on her! I think it would be ungrateful, for really her only offence against you, that I can see, is that she has been too determined to be your friend. You cannot know how hurt and grieved she has been by your absence."

He looked down a little quizzically into her eyes, and she grew crimson in an instant, and bridled her enthusiastic tongue. Did he think she wanted him to come back and fulfil the old programme? It was so like a man to think that.

"Mr. Walton," she said, "I have been indiscreet. I beg your pardon. But, if you know my heart, at least you would not judge me harshly."

"I beg you to believe," he replied, "that not one thought which would offend the most delicate sense of honour or propriety was in my heart."

But after that there was silence.

Mr. Walton would not be persuaded to go that evening to see Miss Barbara, neither did he make a long call at Mr. Ware's; but, after bowing adieu to Miss Ellen, he kept on, and, after paying a few visits to old friends, returned to the hotel.

Old Matthew Drake, the landlord, had known Elwood from his youth. He was a shrewd old fellow, and had made a closer guess of how the land lay between Miss Barbara and Ellen St. John than any other of the townspeople; but he was not given to indiscriminate gossip. "To hear and see and say nothing" was his usual motto. But to-night he felt social. Perhaps, moreover, since Elwood had always been a favourite with him, he had a mind to put the young man on his guard.

So, taking a friendly pipe on the piazza, with no other companion than Elwood, he said:

"So you didn't go to see Miss Barbara. Well, perhaps you were right, though I think the old lady has always had a hankering after you. You see, she's got a man's nature, she has, and she don't take none too closely to Miss Ellen, after all."

"Why, what are you talking of?" asked Elwood.

"Why should she take to Miss St. John?"

"Well, now," said the old man, turning round, "it ain't possible that you hain't heard how that Miss Ellen goes there every day, and there's them that thinks," added the old man, in a whisper, "there's them that thinks, though nobody don't dare to say it, that the old woman has made her will in favour of Miss Ellen, and that Mr. Ware has got it under lock and key."

It was Elwood's turn to flush crimson. Was it true, he wondered, that Ellen St. John could be so true, so disinterested as to wish to bring about a reconciliation between him and Miss Barbara at her own expense? He resolved to see Ellen next day again. She always had been a good girl!

Next day, therefore, he called at Mr. Ware's, and, by way of feeling his ground, honestly inquired of him whether he thought it best for him to see Miss Barbara.

Mr. Ware was a good lawyer, and he saw an opportunity here to play a very pretty little game. To tell the truth, he did want Ellen to inherit that property, because he thought she had honestly earned it. If, with the money once in her own possession, she chose to marry Elwood, he had no objection, particularly as he had a shrewd suspicion that his niece would not probably object to such an arrangement.

So he answered the young man warily, played and parried with him for an hour or so; at the end of this time Elwood was thoroughly convinced that Matthew Drake's suspicions were right. He was man

enough to be glad for Ellen's good fortune, but at the same time his heart began to grow a little cold. He was no fortune-hunter.

"Yes," said Mr. Ware, at length, "I think I'd go and see the old lady, or at least ask her permission to wait upon her. Ellen will be delighted to take your errand. Ellen is a good girl."

At that instant the door opened hastily, and Ellen rushed in, the picture of dismay.

"Oh, come quickly, quickly, Elwood," she said, "and you too, uncle. Miss Barbara is in convulsions, and I fear dying. And I, unhappy I, have done it all!"

The gentlemen were ready in an instant, and crossed the fields by a short path to reach the scene more readily.

When they entered Miss Barbara's presence they found her calmer than when Ellen had left, but the pallor of death was on her face. The power of speech was already gone, but beckoning Elwood to her, she caught him in her arms as he knelt beside her, and laying his fair young head against her withered breast, she bowed her head upon it and died.

Ellen was sobbing: "I have killed her, I have killed her! I told her of his coming too hastily!"

Mr. Ware turned away to the window and wept. Perhaps he was the only one present who could appreciate the depth of Barbara Brathwaite's love.

"At any rate," he said to himself, in a spirit as rare as it is honourable, "that settles the matter about the money. It must be divided equally. Ellen will see it so."

But when he proposed the matter to Elwood, his only answer was:

"I think Ellen and I shall devise means of keeping it all together."

But Ellen insisted upon the division, and that before the wedding-day arrived.

"I have always meant the money should be Elwood's. It shall never be said that he married me to get it."

G. F. C.

FAOETIÆ.

It was a laconic letter from a lady to her husband—"I write you because I have nothing to do, and I conclude because I have nothing to say."

"No, madam, I do not dance now as I used to when I was poor. I am rich now, and I can dance or not as I please."

"WHAT is your name, little girl?" "Minnie." "Minnie what?" "Minnie Don't, mamma calls me."

The most illustrious of all of our London companies is undoubtedly the Shoeblack Brigade, every member of which is a shining character.—*Judy.*

IMPERIAL has discovered that the pleasantest way to take cod-liver oil is to fatten pigeons with it, and then eat the pigeons.

As a rich and pretentious shoddyite was looking at some paintings which he proposed to buy the dealer pointed to a fine one, and said, "That is a dog after Landseer." "Is it really?" exclaimed the pretender. "What is he after him for?"

SCENE—COURT ROOM.

Judge: "Guilty, or not guilty?"

Pat: "How do I know? It isn't for the likes of me to say. Haven't ye got twalve strapping men in boxes there to find out?"

OFF AND ON.

Writer (to old gentleman who is endeavouring to ease his corns): "Shoe-horn, sir?"

Old Gent (testily): "Shoe-horn, no! Confound it all, I want the shoe he'll."—*Fun.*

RAILWAY OFFICIALS AT IT AGAIN.

Ticket Collector: "Show your ticket, please."

Countryman: "What should I do that for, my lad? Do you think I don't know where I am going to? I suppose I can read as well as you!"—*Judy.*

REPLY COURTROOM.

Old Gent: "Ah yes, young Spriggins will come home with you, to be sure; you always have some nice young gentlemen to see you home."

Young Wife: "Well, that is only fair, am I not obliged always to see an old man at home?"

A SANITARY QUESTION.—Mrs. Malaprop wishes to know if the Typhoon at Hong Kong is supposed to have been caused by bad drainage. Also whether that Typhoon was worse than the Typhoon of Japan. She says she has been led to make these inquiries by some unambiguous letters.—*Punch.*

BEKEDDING INHERITANCE.

Sarah Jane: "Goin' to leave, Em'ly!"

Em'ly: "In course! Ackshally master's told the baker's young man not to call no more, as he's goin' to 'ave irritated bread!"

[But she meant "aerated."—*Fun.*]

JUDGE a man by his actions; a poet by his eyes; a lawyer by his leer; a player by his strut; an Irishman by his swagger; an Englishman by his

retundity; a Scotchman by his shrug; a justice by his frown; a great man by his modesty; a tailor by his agility; and a woman by her neatness.

ON FASHIONS.

Old Servant: "There now, Miss Annie, what do you call that?"

Miss Annie: "What do I call what, Adams?"

Old Servant: "Why, that black velvet thing you've got on. I calls it a kicking strap!"—*Punch.*

At a meeting in London to receive a report from the missionaries sent to discover the tribes of Israel, Lord H— was asked to take the chair. "I take," he replied, "a great interest in your researches, gentlemen. The fact is, I have borrowed money from all the Jews now known, and if you can find a new set, I shall feel very much obliged."

THE ANTIQUARY.

Tourist (in Cornwall): "May I be permitted to examine that interesting stone in your field? These ancient Druidical remains are most interesting!"

Farmer: "Sart'nly, sir. May be very interestin' an' arnshunt, but we do atick 'em out for the cattle, an' call 'em robbin' paste!"—*Punch.*

A TEXAN tells this story of lost opportunities: "Now, you see," said he, "land was cheap enough at one time in Texas. I have seen the day when I could have bought a square league of land, covered with fine grass and timber, for a pair of boots." "And why didn't you buy it?" asked his companion. "Didn't have the boots," said the Texan.

MUSH-ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT.

Jones (reading bill of fare): "Ris-de-veau aux champignons. Here, Brown, you've been to Boulogne. What does it mean?"

Brown: "Ris-de-veau—that's veal. Aux champignons! Let me see, or—oh! veal and champagne. Order some of that!"—*Fun.*

A LADY, a few days ago, upon taking up Shelley's novel, "The Last Man," threw it down very sadly, exclaiming, "The last man! Bless me! if such a thing were to happen, what would become of the women!" Grandmother replied, "Never mind, my dear, there are too many 'lads' such as they are!"

MRS. HEAVYSIDES declares it to be a ridiculous fallacy to suppose that a man's weight is calculated to impair his activity. By the way of supporting her position, she asserts that her lord and master weighs over twenty stone, and yet he is not to be beaten by any man living in jumping at conclusions and flying into a towering passion.

PLEASANT PROSPECT.

Jones (on his way to join the shooters): "Well, I 'ope there aint much more of these 'igh 'ills'!"

His Friend: "Ay, it's some steep, and it's like this the whole way; but it's not more than two mile noo, and a walk's a furrrate way o' getting yer wind in working order for the more serious business o' the day!"—*Fun.*

'WARE NUTS!

The sensitive ear is just now distressed by the vociferations of men and boys who go about the streets offering walnuts for sale, and continually crying "warnuts!" Much more painful to hear, however, is the remark, so often made, that walnuts are the nuts for soldiers, that of all nuts they contain the fullest kernels, and those are the kind of nuts wherewith fortifications are shelled.—*Punch.*

RESERVING THE BEST.

"Snobbs," said Mrs. Snobbs to her husband, the day after the ball—"Snobbs, why did you dance with every lady in the room last night before you noticed me?"

"Why, my dear," said the devoted Snobbs, "I was only practising what we do at the table—reserving the best for the last."

THE PLEASURES OF ROATING.

Papa (who has taken mamma and the girls and Mrs. Podgers for a nice row) from the stern sheets: "What I like about rowing is that one gets healthy exercise, and passes through beautiful scenery, without too much exertion." (To his son and heir): "Come, come, James, pull away my boy, we shall be late for dinner."—*Fun.*

A PROMINENT lawyer of Nevada had a suit of importance before Wagstaff, Justice of the Peace in a small mining district in the upper part of the country. After the evidence had been taken, and the lawyers had finished their talkie talkie, the counsel for the plaintiff arose and asked the justice if he would not charge the jury. "Oh, no," replied his honour; "I never charge 'em anything; they don't get much anyhow, and let 'em have all they make."

It is, to say the least of it, a curious circumstance that Mr. Milner, the representative of the Irish International team, who occasioned the defeat of his party at New York the other day, by making a bull's eye at the wrong target, has been guilty of this mistake at home in an even more important competition. In the Elcho Challenge Shield

contest at Wimbledon this year he hit the centre of one of the Scotch targets, mistaking it for his own, and thus, as one of his friends jocularly remarked, "accomplished the finest Irish bull on record."

An irritable tragedian was playing Macbeth, and rushed off to kill Duncan, when there was no blood for the Thane to steep his hands in. "The blood! the blood!" exclaimed he to the agitated property man, who had forgotten it. The actor, however, not to disappoint the audience, clenched his fist, and striking the property man a violent blow upon the nose, coolly washed his hands in the stream that burst from it, and re-entered with the usual words, "I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?"

NOT WITH THE HOUNDS.

A certain bishop was one day rebuking one of his clergy for fox-hunting. "My lord," was the clergyman's answer, "every man must have some relaxation. I assure you I never go to balls."

"Oh," said the bishop, "I perceive you allude to my having been to the Duchess of S—'s party, but I give you my word I was never in the same room as the dancers."

"My lord," responded the clergyman, "my horse and I are getting old, and we are never in the same field as the hounds."

A PATHETIC APPEAL.

"Mamma, shall you let me go to the Wilkinsons' ball, if they give one, this year?"

"No, darling!"

(A pause.)

"You've been to a great many balls, haven't you, mamma?"

"Yes, darling,—and I've seen the folly of them all."

(Another pause.)

"Mightn't I just see the folly of one, mamma?"

[A very long pause.]—Punch.

A CONCLUSIVE ARGUMENT.

On a certain occasion the counsel took some exception to the ruling of the Court on some point, and a dispute arose.

"If the Court please," said the counsel, "I wish to refer to this book a moment," and at the same time picked up a volume.

"There is no referring to any book," exclaimed the Court, angrily. "I have decided the point."

"But your Honour—" persisted the attorney.

"Now, I don't want to hear anything on the subject," yelled the Court. "I tell you again that I have decided the point."

"I know that," was the rejoinder. "I am satisfied of that; but this is a volume of Blackstone. I am certain he differs with your Honour, and only wanted to show you what a fool Blackstone was."

"Ah, indeed," exclaimed the Court, "now you begin to talk."

HOW TO GET A DINNER.

A party who travelled about pretty extensively was greatly perplexed to understand how it was that other persons were waited upon promptly and well served in the hotels while he was almost entirely ignored, and could scarcely obtain a proper meal, complain to and swear at the waiters as he might. At last his eyes were opened to the dodge of feeling the waiters liberally, and, being of an ingenious turn of mind, he determined to improve on the plan.

The next hotel he dined at he took his seat very prominently at the table, and out of a well-filled pocket-book extracted a 5*l.* note, which he laid on the white cloth beside his plate and placed his goblet upon it.

In an instant, almost, he was surrounded by waiters, who seemed to vie with each other in their attentions. Every wish was anticipated, and all the delicacies of the kitchen and pantry were placed before him in tempting array.

Having fared as sumptuously as a prince (to the envy of many of the other guests), he took up the note, and, beckoning to the nearest waiter, was immediately besieged by a half-dozen or so. Holding the note in one hand, he pointed to it with the other, and inquired of the crowd—"Do you see that note?"

"Oh! yes, sir!" they all exclaimed in chorus. "Then take a good look at it," he replied, "for you will never see it again."

Saying which he departed, leaving the waiters agast.

FRAGMENTS FROM THE LATE EXPLOSION.

A silly young thing, who had determined to elope, heard the explosion, but failed in going off herself. Her father, however, blew her up the next day.

A practical old gentleman, in the neighbourhood, heard the report, but did not believe it for a moment.

An old maid is certain that her favourite newspaper is right in saying that "the explosion was caused by the electric fluid, which was playing

about all night;"—the very idea of the police allowing it!

An individual who had been at a champagne-supper party remarked that "the Regent's Canal must be jolly well up."

A party at Hounslow, who had written an elaborate account of an extraordinary meteoric display, did not post his letter.

An elated glazier was so tickled with the lucky windfall in his trade that he unhappily burst with laughter, and of course, poor man, has never been seen to smile since.

A nursemaid, who had promised her charge a good shaking, was anticipated by the explosion, and so let off the infant.

A doctor, after a hasty summons to the house of a jocosely patient, was much disgusted at being asked whether he could do anything for his patient, because, if not, he shouldn't have anything for them.

The principal of an Academy, who had kindly promised his young gentlemen a few experiments in explosives, is invalidated with a severe cold.

A political economist was employed in demonstrating, the day after the explosion, that the accident was not really good for trade.—*Judy.*

THE LAY OF THE LABOURER.

He rises with the sun,
Before the signal gun
Has broken the still calm of sleep,
Of multitudes in slumber deep,
Preparing for the day,
Which yields him scanty pay.

His faithful wife prepares
The frugal meal; her cares
And household duties then begin;
The chief reward she seeks to win
Is her brave husband's love,
With blessings from above.

His face is brown with tan,
You see the honest man
Through the sun-bronze upon his face,
And in his simple speech you trace
The stuff of which are made
The heroes of the spade.

He's at his task "on time,"
Though not a task sublime,
No shirking strategy, no trick,
Behind the hoe, or spade, or pick,
On highway, lot, or farm,
When wielded by his arm.

Broad as the earth the base
Of labour, and the race
Have raised its apex to the skies,
There honour's stainless banner flies,
Thanks to the toiling build
For monuments they build.

Without work of the hand,
Ungloved, large, rough and tanned,
The nations never could be fed,
And we would starve for lack of bread;
To save from storied skies,
No sheltering roof would rise.

'Tis honest toil that aids,
With drills and picks and spades,
To make this life worth living here,
And lift us to a better sphere;
Work of the hand or head
Should earn our daily bread.

G. W. B.

GEMS.

UNLESS a tree has borne blossoms in the spring you will vainly look for fruit on it in autumn.

PERFECT peace is not possible even in the deepest retirement. A wolf will creep into the most pastoral life.

AN expert seaman is tried in a tempest, a runner in a race, a captain in a battle, a Christian in adversity.

THERE is this difference between happiness and wisdom: he that thinks himself the happiest man generally is so, but he that thinks himself the wisest is generally the greatest fool.

A wise man will never rust out. As long as he can move and breathe he will be doing for himself, his neighbour, or for posterity. Who is old? Not the man of energy, not the day-labourer in science, art or benevolence, but he only who suffers his energies to waste away and the springs of life to become motionless, on whose hands the hours drag heavily, and to whom all things wear the garb of gloom.

WHAT does become of time? We constantly hear people complaining that they have no time; no time to read, no time to care for art, no time to decorate the house, no time for anything! Now, where does all the time go to that young men and

maidens have allotted to them? The Creator made a liberal allowance of time to all the human family. If one had only a fly's life or the time apportioned to the tribes of ephemera, it would not seem strange if one were pinched for time. What becomes of it?

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

CHOCOLATE CREAM.—One quart of milk, three tablespoonfuls of grated chocolate, two of corn starch, sugar and salt to taste; sweeten the milk and let it come to a boil, then stir in the chocolate and corn starch mixed with a little water; boil about five minutes, and flavour with vanilla.

WHY EARS SHOULD NOT BE BOXED.—In "Physiology for Practical Use" we find the following:—There are several things very commonly done which are extremely injurious to the ear, and ought to be carefully avoided. And first, children's ears ought never to be boxed. We have seen that the passage of the ear is closed by a thin membrane, especially adapted, so that it is influenced by every impulse of the air, and with nothing but the air to support it internally. What, then, can be more likely to injure this membrane than a sudden and forcible compression of the air in front of it? If any one designed to break or overstretch the membrane he could scarcely devise a more efficient means than to bring the hand suddenly and forcibly down upon the passage of the ear, thus driving the air violently before it, with no possibility of its escape but by the membrane giving way. Many children are made deaf by boxes on the ears in this way.

STATISTICS.

REAL PROPERTY STATISTICS.—A parliamentary return obtained by Mr. Stansfeld relating to real property assessment in the years 1815 to 1873 shows that with respect to property tax assessment, the gross value of real property, according to Schedule A, in 1814-15 was 53,495,374*l.*; and the gross rental of lands, according to Schedule B, was 36,260,000*l.* In 1871-72, the amounts under these two heads were 159,983,932*l.* and 48,914,230*l.* respectively. The gross estimated rental assessed to the poor-rates was in 1855-56, the first year in which it is given in the return, 86,077,676*l.*; in 1872-73 it was 132,453,870*l.* The rateable value assessed to the poor-rate in 1840-41 was 62,450,030*l.*, in 1872-73 it was 112,317,603*l.* The total sum levied as poor-rate in 1814-15 was 7,647,676*l.*, and in 1872-73, 11,486,117*l.* The sum expended in the relief of the poor in 1814-15 was 5,418,846*l.*, and in 1872-73, 7,692,169*l.*

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE directors of the Alexandra Palace Company have decided to open the new palace with a grand musical performance on Saturday, 1st May, 1875.

MADAME ARABELLA GODDARD, who was wrecked in the Flintshire, has recovered all her property (with the exception of a purse containing about 100*l.*) together with her famous metal piano, which has made the tour with her.

THE Mint has ceased to issue pence and halfpence for some little time, inasmuch as some alterations are being made on Tower Hill. No doubt the post-office will get the benefit of the stoppage—postage stamps will be taken as "penny bank-notes."

IT is not high crimes, such as robbery and murder, which destroy the peace of society. The village gossip, family quarrels, jealousies and bickerings between neighbours, meddlesomeness and tattling, are the worms which eat into all social happiness.

ACCORDING to a contemporary, which says it obtains its information from reliable sources, the silk production of the world amounts to 8,462,100 kilogrammes; of which Italy produces 3,125,700, China 3,105,700, France 636,800, Bengal 594,000, Japan 508,000, Spain 171,400, Georgia, Persia and Khorasan 110,000, Syria 107,500, Broussa 87,400, and Salonica 83,500.

THE sale of post-cards is said to be so seriously diminishing that the Post-office authorities have begun to devote some serious attention to the subject. The sale is big enough as far as numbers go, not less than 72,000,000 cards having been issued in 1873. But those figures showed a diminution of 5 per cent. on the issue of the previous year, and the decrease is still going on.

THE late Alexandre Dumas is said to have left behind him an unpublished romance of the most thrilling interest. The work is the story of a little girl in whom the novelist felt a great interest, and as, dying poor, he could give her no money, he bequeathed her the romance, reckoning that after his death its value would be trebled and would provide his protégée with a handsome dot.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MISS N. E. T.—We could not use or dispose of such verses as these you have sent.

LILY OF THE VALLEY.—The handwriting is tolerably good. The spelling, if we may consider one or two trivialities as slips of the pen, is correct.

H. L.—If the lady does not write to you direct, it would seem that her notions on the subject differ from yours.

JOHY H.—We cannot undertake to be the medium through which such an exchange as you desire can be effected.

A. P.—We are always pleased to give any information to our correspondents or assistance we are able to give them on this page.

BIRMINGHAM MECHANIC.—We have already given your applications a fair share of consideration and we cannot, just now, do anything more to forward your views.

J. B. W.—You put yourself out of court, as the phrase runs, by the omission to authenticate the letter in the usual way.

JAMES O.—Your request cannot be complied with. If the lady does not communicate with you, she has, doubtless, reasons of her own for wishing the matter to terminate.

ALICE C.—But Andrew will also require to have an opinion on the subject, and as long as Alice thinks proper to give such scanty information about herself Andrew will have no materials wherewith to form an opinion.

F. D. O.—There seems to be an air of improbability about the statement. It might be asked—since it was thought well to give such particulars as the statement contains—why were they not extended and definitely completed.

KATE H.—The answer to your letter depends upon the value of the evidence you can adduce in support of the alleged cruelty. You should write down all the facts of which you consider you have cause to complain and place the written statement in the hands of a solicitor.

FAIR MARIE OF IRELAND.—Pray be advised to postpone for the present your matrimonial views. You are much too young, the sad experience of many would tell you so, if you would but listen. Try and learn some handicraft.

MISS M.—Probably on reconsideration you may wish the announcement deferred, for Mevagissey is a long way from London and its suburbs; too long even for a sweetheart to travel to and fro as frequently as would be necessary for him to ascertain the disposition of the lady who was inclined to look favourably upon him.

ALPHA.—We believe the Galvanic Chain Band to be an extremely valuable agent in the cure or alleviation of those diseases with which it professes to grapple. The invention is a perfectly honest one, and the probability of its curative powers has been certified to by men of eminence; but of course its powers are limited.

RICHARD N.—If we might offer a suggestion we should say that your landlady would be rather a likely person to forward the views you have communicated to us. Solicit, at all events in the first instance, the kind offices of the good lady; and when you do so may your lucky star light you to your love!

B. S.—We are obliged to you for your letter. You appear to have made out a prima facie case in your own favour. We have not, unfortunately, either the volume of poetry or the number of the periodical to confirm your statement, and our regret at the state of affairs the correspondence seems to disclose is not lessened by the absence of these important proofs.

GRACE.—The facts as stated in your letter are sufficient, if proved, to entitle you to a divorce. Estimates of expense are no proof to mislead that we must decline saying anything on that part of the subject. If you proceed you must have the assistance of a solicitor, who, having heard and questioned you about the pros and cons of the affair, will be better able to talk to you about costs than we are.

ADOLPH.—A prudent young man will refrain from getting married during the term of his apprenticeship or during his minority. And if this great event of life can be postponed for a few years after coming of age, so much the better, says the general opinion. Certainly at nineteen a male is too young to marry. Postpone the subject five years at all events, and during that time work as hard and learn as much as you can.

MURDOX.—He is handsome, fond of dancing and has 1000! He thinks he is thus qualified to enter the matrimonial state. It does not appear that the lady to whom he responds takes quite a satisfactory view of his marital pretensions, she perhaps would like to know from what quarter the housekeeping money was likely to come when the 1000 has danced away. Will Mr. Murdock ruminate upon this preliminary objection and then write again?

HOMERIO.—Midshipmen enter the navy between the

age of thirteen and fifteen as naval cadets. They are required to pass an ordinary examination in general knowledge in which especial attention is paid to geography and the lower branches of mathematics. Influence is often required to place a boy as midshipman; it is also a good plan to manage that at least the closing period of his school-days should be passed at one of the naval schools. An outfit can be purchased for about 35l.

WEDDING BILLS.—The contents of your letter are much too indefinite. Little enough insight does a girl get of the sort of man who would be her sweetheart when he tells her about his complexion, his age, his eyes and his hair. But when on these ordinary points he is reticent, and when on almost every other point he gives no intimation, a girl feels that something less comprehensible than a shadow is addressing her; for to the honour of the fair sex be it spoken they are not to be won by money alone, useful addendum though that article is to other qualifications.

HAPPY WILLIAM.—If you would follow the example of wise and successful men you should not marry until you have passed through some seven or eight more years. As long engagements have not been generally found to produce happy results, it follows that you should postpone any overt acts in the direction of marriage and for the present confine your attention to the cultivation of your powers of observation and study and the acquisition of a thorough knowledge of the duties of that position in life you propose to occupy. As you would wish by-and-by to reap a good harvest, try to use your seed-time well.

NELLIE FILIUS.—Your verses addressed to "My own Jennie dear" are brimful of affection, as no doubt they should be. But this sort of thing is often too sacred for the public gaze, and priceless though it be will not of itself stand the wear and tear of life. The sweets and the rewards of exertion must not be put, even by a poet in the place of exertion itself. The kisses make the bread and cheese very sweet, but are not the things that win the bread. You dream of Jennie's soothing care of you, of fortune's smiles and heaven's blessing—on what? On your luxurious dependence on Jennie's sympathy? That is a mistake; it will never do. You must do some better work than that. Your handwriting is good enough for the purpose named.

BUT ONE!

"This little maid, just two years old,"

Said grandpa, as she took

The pretty babe upon her knee,

With such a loving look;

"This little princess rules us all,

From grandpa down to cook!

"Oh, how we plot and how we plan,

And how we run and run

Upstairs and down, and in and out,

And call it naught but fun;

And all for this our royal plot,

Because there is but one!

"'Twas much the same when I was young;

(Ah! Memory serves us quick),

As grandpa says, I scratched and scratched

As much for our one 'chick,'

Or more, than when a clamouring brood

Clustered about us thick!

"And now we seem, grandpa and I,

To live the old days o'er;

Although we're nearing very fast

The bright celestial shore."

Here grandpa smiled, as if she saw

The loved ones gone before!

God spare the dear "old folks," we pray,

For many and many a year!

Oh! may their skies still brighter be,

Without a cloud or tear

To dim the glory of their days,

While they are waiting here!

M. A. K.

H. M. H.—Intelligence, energy, shrewdness, and industry; those are the notions that pervade our mind at the first glance of the photograph you have sent. Then, as it seems to us, she has never been vexed with what may be termed the passion of love as distinguished from love itself—and happy would she be never will be. Her ideas of duty are paramount. With a kind heart she helps the necessitous, with whom she may come in contact, to help themselves. With no duty neglected—with an open but not lavish hand, with some pity for the folly that leads the objects of her care into a mess, and with much perplexity arising from the lot of misery there is in the world, she yet is one of those of whom it is written

"Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife

Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;

Along the cool, sequester'd vale of life

They kept the noiseless tenor of their way."

At least that is the effect upon our imagination produced by the contemplation of her portrait.

MAY CONSTANCE.—The countenance of the portrait you have sent seems to us to be expressive of strength of character and a cosy disposition. The eyes have a slight touch of slyness about them and the shape of the lips seems to indicate that they are not unaccustomed to use some gentle sarcasms upon proper occasions. The face, it is true, is not modelled upon the classic line of beauty, but it is indicative of firmness and reliability which tones down a natural tendency to coquetry and merriment. The pretty speeches ordinarily current amongst lovers would have no effect on this young lady. She must have something more than words on which to build her hopes. So realistic do her notions appear to be that it is just possible she might be too exacting for her own happiness, but only let her be matched to the man of her own free choice and you may depend upon it she will show you a home as happy and as comfortable, whether it be in a cottage or a mansion, as a mortal can expect to enjoy. The sauciness and the security of her retreat will make ample amends for any little difference of opinion that might override once in a blue moon or so. A famous paragon, a good partner, and a good wife ought to leave a man little to wish for, so that in his

happiness and the comforts his earnings enable her to enjoy your friend may become rich because she will be content. The circumflex in the French expression "tata-tata" is pronounced like the a in the English word "hay." The handwriting of your letter is very good and the spelling faultless. Concerning the defect of your eyesight you should at once consult an oculist.

AN OFFICER, twenty-nine, about to take Holy Orders is anxious to meet with a lady desirous of making herself with a clergyman; some means of her own desirable.

CLARA C., eighteen, 5ft. 7in., of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a tall, dark young man, who is steady and fond of home.

BEAT TO WINDWARD BILL wishes to marry a fair young lady about twenty. He is twenty-four, 5ft. 9in., dark complexion, and fit for inspection.

WELSH GIRL, twenty-four, black hair and eyes, domesticated, and fond of music, would like to correspond with a tradesman about her own age.

LILLIE MARR, twenty-three, light complexion, rather tall, a good housekeeper and used to business, would like to correspond with a dark-complexioned young man; a tradesman preferred.

M. B., seaman in the navy, 5ft. 5in., fair, and considered good looking, wishes to correspond with a young lady about eighteen, good looking, who would not object to be a sailor's wife.

FLORENCE E. S., eighteen, fair, light hair and eyes and of a loving disposition, wishes to correspond with a young gentleman about twenty-one, tall, dark, and fond of home; a tradesman or clerk preferred.

H. W. B., twenty-three, 5ft. 11in., flaxen hair, late of the German army—at present living in England—would be glad to correspond with a young English lady under twenty-one, of good appearance, with a view to matrimony.

MARY, twenty-one, dark hair and eyes, very fresh colour, moderately tall, would like to correspond with a tall, dark young man about twenty-three, who can sing, and is fond of home. "May" is desperately fond of music, and prefers a clerk.

LILY OF THE VALLEY, twenty, medium height, dark-brown hair, hazel eyes, considered good looking, very loving, and domesticated, wishes to correspond with a steady, respectable young man about twenty-four, one with dark hair and eyes, and fond of home; a mechanic or tradesman preferred.

ALFRED ALL ALONE wishes to marry a pretty and domesticated young lady about twenty, who would endeavour to make him happy. He is a chemist, respectfully connected, has a good business, and is in receipt of a good income, with other excellent prospects; twenty-four, fair, whiskers and moustache.

HUGHAN, twenty-three, author and government clerk, would be glad to correspond with a good-looking young lady with view to early marriage. The respondent must be from seventeen to twenty, amiable, well educated, domesticated and fond of home and children; a blonde plump lady with means preferred.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

AMICUS is responded to by—"Kate," eighteen, fair complexion, dark-brown hair and eyes.

WILLIAM by—"Harriett B.," nineteen, medium height, pleasant tempered, very affectionate, thoroughly domesticated, and thinks she would be a "loving partner."

FREDERIC J. by—"Rose," eighteen, rather tall, fair, considered good looking, teacher at a private school, and fond of music and singing.

MERRY TOM by—"Lonely Christina," who thinks him all that she could wish for, she would like to hear more from him.

TRUSSARD by—"Minnie," who is dark, good looking, intelligent, musical, respectable connections, capable of managing a household economically, and has a small income.

ERNEST by—"Lottie," eighteen, fair, with dark eyes; and by—"Steady Meg," twenty-two, blue eyes, brown hair, very affectionate, domesticated, fairly educated, and thinks she is just the sort of wife "Ernest" would like.

MACPAC by—"Eritz Schwarz," twenty-two, 5ft. 6in., black moustache, German, correspondent in a large shipping warehouse, has an income of 150l. per annum, is all that "Madcap" would wish for; by—"Alfred B.," twenty, medium height, good looking, curly hair, and son of a Manchester merchant; by—"Douglas the Scot," thirty-six, 5ft. 7in., auburn hair, a mechanic, steady, fond of home, would make her a comfortable and loving husband; and by—"Romero," twenty-one, 5ft. 6in., good looking, well connected and very steady.

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